

DUTCH PUSH BACK AGAINST PETE CRITICS

TOBY STERLING
Associated Press

AMSTERDAM (AP) — A Facebook page seeking to preserve the “Black Pete” clowns in blackface who accompany St. Nicholas to the Netherlands during the holidays has become



In this 2012 photo persons dressed as “Zwarte Piet” or “Black Pete” attend a parade after St. Nicholas, or Sinterklaas, arrived by boat in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

(AP Photo/ Margriet Faber)

the fastest-growing Dutch-language page ever, receiving 1 million “likes” in a single day.

The mushrooming popularity of the “Pete-ition” page reflects the depth of emotional attachment most Dutch people — 90 percent of whom have European ancestry — feel to a figure that helped launch the tradition of Santa Claus.

It also reflects their anger at critics who call it racist. Those critics include foreigners who they feel don’t understand the tradition. They also include many of the country’s most prominent blacks.

“Don’t let the Netherlands’ most beautiful tradition disappear,” the page says.

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SKAKEL WINS NEW TRIAL

Michael Skakel leaves the courtroom after the conclusion of trial regarding his legal representation at State Superior Court in Vernon, Conn. A Connecticut judge on Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013, granted a new trial for Skakel, ruling his attorney failed to adequately represent him when he was convicted in 2002 of killing his neighbor in 1975.

(AP Photo/Jason Rearick)
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Kerry reassures Israel on Iran talks

MICHAEL R. GORDON
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ROME - Secretary of State John Kerry sought to assure Israel on Wednesday that the United States would insist on strict constraints on Iran's nuclear program in its newly reinvigorated negotiations with Tehran. Before meeting with the Israeli prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, at the residence of the U.S. ambassador here, Kerry said the Obama administration welcomed the change of tone by Iran but "words are no substitute for action." "No deal is better than a bad deal," Kerry added, a phrase that U.S. officials have frequently used in

and abandon its construction of a heavy-water plant that would produce plutonium, Netanyahu added. Iran has insisted that the West acknowledge its "right" to enrich uranium as part of a negotiated compromise that puts limits on its nuclear program, a step the United States has not publicly taken. Having staked out broad demands on the Iranian nuclear program, Netanyahu argued that the international sanctions against Iran should not be eased in return for a "partial deal." On Nov. 7, the United States and other world powers are scheduled to resume talks in Geneva on

comprehensive Middle East peace agreement in nine months, and a third of that time has elapsed. Kerry sought to move the talks along by meeting recently in London with Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the Palestinian Authority, and has had frequent conversations with Netanyahu. The Israeli prime minister told reporters on Wednesday that he and Kerry talk virtually every other day. And Kerry has set aside the entire afternoon and evening for his discussions here with Netanyahu. On Monday, Kerry met with senior diplomats from the Arab League in Paris to maintain support by Arab



U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry, right, and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu at Villa Taverna in Rome, Oct. 23, 2013. Kerry sought to assure Israel on Wednesday that the U.S. would insist on strict constraints on Iran's nuclear program in its newly reinvigorated negotiations with Tehran.
(Gregorio Borgia/Pool via The New York Times)

recent weeks to try to reassure lawmakers in the United States as well as Israel and Arab states that the White House will not make risky concessions. But Netanyahu listed a range of steps that Israel says Iran needs to take to demonstrate that it is not developing nuclear weapons, steps that appeared to go well beyond a compromise that the United States and other world powers are prepared to explore with Tehran. Iran, Netanyahu told reporters in a joint appearance with Kerry, must get rid of all of its fissile material and should not be allowed to have any centrifuges to enrich uranium. Iran should also close its underground nuclear facilities

Iran's nuclear program. The negotiations between Israel and the Palestinians were also a major subject on Kerry and Netanyahu's agenda, though not one they were prepared to discuss publicly in detail. Trying to convey the impression that there is momentum in those talks, Kerry said Israeli and Palestinian negotiators had met 13 times and "are meeting even now." Martin S. Indyk, Kerry's special envoy for those talks, is in Jerusalem to facilitate those discussions, the secretary of state emphasized. Despite the multiple meetings, it is not apparent what, if any, headway has been made. When the talks began in July, Kerry said the goal was to conclude a

nations for the talks. In an apparent effort to influence Israeli public opinion, Kerry noted on Monday that Prince Saud al-Faisal of Saudi Arabia had endorsed the concept of Middle East peace, one in which Israel would have normal relations with all Arab and Muslim nations. "That's a vision, and it's a vision worth fighting for," Kerry said then. But Qatar's foreign minister, Khalid al-Atiyah, suggested in a joint appearance with Kerry on Monday that the United States needed to put more pressure on Israel and play more of an active role in suggesting compromises in the talks. Al-Atiyah said "actual" U.S. participation in the negotiations was needed. □

CARIBBEAN NEWS BRIEFS

\$34M worth of cocaine seized near USVI

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Federal authorities have seized \$34 million worth of cocaine from a speedboat near the U.S. Virgin Islands. The U.S. Coast Guard said Wednesday that it found more than 1,100 kilograms (2,500 pounds) in the boat spotted just south of St. Croix. U.S. Attorney Rosa Emilia Rodriguez says two Puerto Ricans and one U.S. Virgin Islander aboard the boat have been charged with possession with intent to distribute. Coast Guard Capt. Drew Pearson says it is the second major seizure in less than two weeks. Authorities recently confiscated 1,100 kilograms (2,400 pounds) near the south border of the Dominican Republic. □

Guyana OKs wedding of girl to her rapist

GEORGETOWN, Guyana (AP) — A Guyana judge's decision to allow the marriage of a 15-year-old girl to the man accused of raping and getting her pregnant has riled the South American country. Chief Justice Ian Chang ruled that the couple could marry on humanitarian grounds after the girl became pregnant after her parents petitioned the court to authorize the union, saying they had given up trying to persuade her to return home. They said in their petition that the next best thing was to allow her to marry. Activists said Wednesday that they were researching Guyana's laws to determine whether Chang's ruling is legal. □

American jet makes emergency landing

KINGSTON, Jamaica (AP) — An American Airlines plane made a safe emergency landing late Tuesday evening after the pilot reported a fire in the cockpit, a smoking engine and a loss of fuel, Turks & Caicos Islands officials said. A spokeswoman for American Airlines disputed the report of a fire, saying the jet made the emergency landing due to a "mechanical issue related to one of the engines" and an indication of "low oil." "There was no fire anywhere," spokeswoman Laura Masvidal said. The British Caribbean territory's disaster management and emergencies department said there were no injuries among the 175 people aboard the Boeing 757. □

PR: state-run power company reviewed

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Puerto Rico's governor says he is overhauling the island's state-run power company amid corruption allegations and criticism that bills are on average more than twice that of the U.S. mainland. Gov. Alejandro Garcia Padilla said Wednesday that he will reduce power costs by 20 percent in two years and by 50 percent in 12 years. He also pledges to create a committee to oversee the contracts, operations and expenses of the power company, which is known as the Electric Energy Authority. Garcia says other changes include providing live transmission of the meetings of the company's board of directors. □

Haiti quake camps house below 200,000

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti (AP) — A humanitarian agency for the United Nations says the number of Haitians still displaced by the 2010 earthquake has dropped below 200,000. It says 171,974 people are now living in the gloomy shelter camps. That marks an 89 percent decline since the camp population peaked in July 2010 at 1.5 million people. The drop stems from a combination of violent evictions, voluntary departures and efforts to house people through rental subsidies. The bulletin from the United Nations' Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs draws on information gathered from the International Organization for Migration. □

White House aide fired over Twitter feed

WASHINGTON (AP) — A White House national security official was fired after it was discovered that he was behind an anonymous Twitter account that criticized the Obama administration.

Jofi Joseph was nonproliferation director on the National Security Council and was involved in nuclear negotiations with Iran.

His postings on the @NatSecWonk account, which no longer is available on Twitter, often took shots at administration policy and figures, including Secretary of State John Kerry and Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, along with members of Congress. One tweet said: "More people should be asking why John Kerry installed two former aides, both with ZERO foreign policy experience, into top posts at State."

Another tweet said: "That Obama only called Kerry/Hagel AFTER he made decision with his WH aides on going to Hill underscores how all foreign policy is WH-based." The tweet referred to Obama's surprise decision in late August to seek congressional authorization for military strikes against Syria as punishment for a chemical weapons attack in August. Joseph could not be reached Wednesday for comment. No one answered the telephone at a number believed to be his. In a statement to Politico, Joseph took "complete responsibility" for the Twitter feed, saying it started as a "parody account." He apologized to those he insulted.

A White House official confirmed that Joseph no longer works for the administration, but declined further comment on personnel matters.

It was not immediately clear how officials determined that Joseph was behind the Twitter account. White House spokesman Jay Carney said Wednesday he had no additional information to provide. □

Lobbying heats up ahead of farm bill talks

RON NIXON

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WASHINGTON - As the House and Senate prepare to meet next week to work out differences in their farm bills, lobbying efforts are intensifying to get last-minute changes to the 1,000-page legislation that sets the nation's farm and nutrition policies.

Work on the farm bill was delayed after contentious battles in the House over proposed cuts to the food stamp program, and the bill was stalled further by the government shutdown. Anti-poverty groups want to make changes in the international food aid program that would allow the Agency for International Development to increase the amount of food it is allowed to purchase closer to where it is needed, rather than buying from U.S. farmers and shipping it overseas.

A coalition of budget watchdog groups and a seafood trade group are lobbying to repeal a \$20 million catfish inspection program at the Agriculture Department, which was put into the 2008 farm bill at the request of catfish farmers to limit imports.

Opponents say it is duplicative, because there is already an inspection program at the Food and Drug Administration.

Food banks and other advocates are hoping to stop huge cuts to the food stamp program that they say will cause millions of

people to go hungry.

And farm groups are asking lawmakers to maintain certain farm subsidy programs and resist making changes to others, like the sugar program, which limits domestic production and imports. Farm groups have also asked lawmakers to

Lawmakers from the two chambers plan to meet next Wednesday to begin negotiations on the bill.

They face a number of obstacles to a final five-year farm bill. Although the two bills make similar reforms to farm programs - such as eliminating \$5 billion in di-

stamp program. The Republican-led House proposed a \$40 billion cut to the nutrition program, while the Senate bill cuts \$4.5 billion.

Rep. James McGovern, D-Mass., one of the lawmakers selected by the House Democratic leadership to



Rep. Jim McGovern (D-Mass.), one of the lawmakers working on farm bill negotiations in 2013, at a news conference in Washington. As the House and Senate prepare to meet in October 2013 to work out differences in their farm bills, lobbying efforts are intensifying to get last-minute changes to the 1,000-page legislation that sets the nation's farm and nutrition policies.

(Philip Scott Andrews/The New York Times)

resist changes to the crop insurance program, which environmental groups say provides incentives for farmers to plant crops on land that is not suitable for farming.

rect payments that go to farm and farm landowners whether they grow crops or not - the bills contain significant differences.

The biggest are the proposed cuts to the food

work on farm bill negotiations, called the cuts, particularly those in the House, unacceptable.

"The farm bill should not be making people hungry," he said. □

Democrats worried by health law rollout woes

ALAN FRAM

RICARDO ZALDIVAR

Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) —

House Democrats are worried about persistent problems with the rollout of President Barack Obama's health care law, his most significant domestic achievement — and one says the president needs to "man up" and fire those responsible.

Democrats facing re-election in 2014 were hoping to run on the law's new ben-

efits for millions of uninsured Americans. Instead, a litany of computer problems is keeping consumers from signing up and buying insurance on the health care exchanges.

Democratic Rep. Richard Nolan emerged from a Wednesday meeting with administration officials and told reporters the rollout has "damaged the brand" of the health care law.

Nolan said, "The president needs to man up, find out who was responsible, and

fire them." He did not name anyone. Obama says he's as frustrated as anyone and has promised a "tech surge" to fix the balky HealthCare.gov website.

The Republican leader of the House, Speaker John Boehner, told reporters that "the whole threat of Obamacare" continues "to hang over our economy like a wet blanket."

"More Americans are going to lose their health insurance than are going to sign up at these exchange-

es," Boehner said.

Obama has turned to longtime adviser Jeffrey Zients to provide management advice to help fix the system. Zients, a former acting director of the Office of Management and Budget and a veteran management consultant, will be on a short-term assignment at the Department of Health and Human Services before he is due to take over as director of Obama's National Economic Council next year. □

Kennedy cousin Skakel wins new trial in Moxley death

**DAVE COLLINS
JOHN CHRISTOFFERSEN
HARTFORD, Connecticut (AP)** — A U.S. judge on Wednesday granted a new trial for Kennedy cousin Michael Skakel, ruling his attorney failed to adequately represent him when he was convicted in 2002 of killing his teenage neighbor in 1975 with a golf

club. The ruling marked a dramatic reversal after years of unsuccessful appeals by Skakel, the 53-year-old nephew of Robert F. Kennedy's widow, Ethel Kennedy. Skakel is serving 20 years to life. Skakel's current attorney, Hubert Santos, said he expects to file a motion for

bail on Thursday. If a judge approves it, Skakel could then post bond and be released from prison. "We're very, very thrilled," Santos said. Skakel argued his trial attorney, Michael Sherman, was negligent in defending him when he was convicted in the bludgeoning of Martha Moxley when they were 15.



Michael Skakel listens to testimony at Rockville Superior Court in Vernon, Conn. A Connecticut judge on Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013, granted a new trial for Skakel, ruling his attorney failed to adequately represent him when he was convicted in 2002 of killing his neighbor in 1975.

(AP Photo/Jason Rearick)

John Moxley, the victim's brother, said the ruling took him and his family by surprise. Bridgeport State's Attorney John Smriga told The Associated Press that prosecutors will appeal the decision. Prosecutors have contended Sherman's efforts far exceeded standards. Prosecutor Susann Gill said the state's case included three confessions and nearly a dozen incriminating statements by Skakel over the years. She also said there was strong evidence of motive. "His drug-addled mental state, coupled with the infuriating knowledge that his hated brother Tommy had a sexual liaison with Martha, and the fact that Martha spurned his advances, triggered the rage which led him to beat her to death with a golf club," Gill wrote. Among other issues, the judge wrote that the defense could have focused more on Skakel's brother, Thomas, who was an early suspect because he was the last person seen with Moxley. Had Sherman done so, "there is a reasonable probability that the outcome of the trial would have been different," the

judge wrote. Santos argued that the prosecutors' case rested entirely on two witnesses of dubious credibility who came forward with stories of confessions after 20 years and the announcement of a reward. Skakel had an alibi, he said. Santos contends Sherman was "too enamored with the media attention to focus on the defense." Sherman told criminal defense attorneys at a seminar in Las Vegas six months before the trial that one of his goals in representing Skakel was to have a "good time," Santos said. "Defending a murder charge ... is not about getting invited to A-list parties in New York City, or launch parties for the trendy new television show, or going to the Academy Awards and all the 'cool parties' afterwards," Santos wrote in court papers. Sherman has said he did all he could to prevent Skakel's conviction and denied he was distracted by media attention. Skakel, who maintains his innocence, was denied parole last year and was told he would not be eligible again to be considered for release for five years. □

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Soft-spoken Mass. teen accused of killing teacher

JAY LINDSAY

Associated Press

DANVERS, Massachusetts (AP) —

A well-liked teacher was found dead in woods behind this quiet town's high school, and a 14-year-old boy who was found walking along a state highway overnight was charged with killing her.

Blood found in a second-floor school bathroom helped lead investigators to the body of Colleen Ritzer, a 24-year-old math teacher at Danvers High School who was reported missing when she didn't come home from work on Tuesday, District Attorney Jonathan Blodgett said.

"She was a very, very respected, loved teacher," Blodgett said.

The suspect, Philip Chism, was arraigned on a murder charge Wednesday and ordered held without bail. Officials haven't released a cause of death.

The teenager, described by classmates as soft-spoken and pleasant, also did not come home from school the day before and was spotted walking along the road in a neighboring town at about 12:30 a.m. Wednesday.

Prosecutors said in court that Chism beat Ritzer to death.

A court filing said Ritzer and Chism were known to each other from the high school, but it did not elaborate. The arrest was made based on statements by the suspect and corroborating evidence at multiple scenes, investigators said in court documents.

Ritzer's family said they are mourning the death of their "amazing, beautiful daughter and sister."

"Everyone that knew and loved Colleen knew of her passion for teaching and how she mentored each and every one of her stu-

dents," the family said in a statement provided by her uncle Dale Webster.

At his arraignment in adult court, Chism's defense attorney argued for the proceeding to be closed and her client to be allowed to

settle from Tennessee before the start of the school year and was a top scorer on the school's junior varsity soccer team, said Kyle Cahill, a junior who also plays soccer. He said the team had been wonder-

posite of aggressive."

Ryan Kelleher, a senior, said students related to the young teacher, who liked to wear jeans and UGG boots just like the teenagers she taught. Kelleher, who also plays soccer,



Philip Chism, 14, stands during his arraignment for the death of Danvers High School teacher Colleen Ritzer in Salem District Court in Salem, Mass., Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013. Chism has been ordered held without bail. (AP Photo/Patrick Whitemore)

Jury finds Saudi airman guilty in sex assault case

KEN RITTER

Associated Press

LAS VEGAS (AP) — A jury on Wednesday found a Saudi Arabian air force sergeant guilty of sexually assaulting a 13-year-old boy at a Las Vegas hotel last New Year's Eve. Mazen Alotaibi could face a sentence of 35 years to life in prison.

Prosecutors said the 24-year-old forced the boy into sex in a bathroom at the Circus Circus hotel.

Alotaibi didn't testify. He told police the boy consented to sex for marijuana or money. His defense lawyer said Alotaibi was too intoxicated after drinking all night at a strip club to know if he was doing anything wrong.

Nevada state law says a child under 16 can't give consent. Alotaibi was convicted of two counts of sexual assault with a minor under 14, two counts of lewdness with a child under 14 and one count of kidnapping. He also was convicted of felony burglary for entering a building with intent to commit a crime,

and of misdemeanor coercion. He was acquitted of two lesser counts involving lewdness.

Alotaibi has been held for more than nine months in jail on \$1.7 million bail.

The boy testified that he approached Alotaibi and other men early Dec. 31 because he smelled marijuana on their clothes and wanted pot.

The jury heard that Alotaibi smoked marijuana with the boy outside the hotel and asked the boy for sex. Alotaibi was seen on elevator surveillance video leaning down and apparently kissing the boy's neck on the way to the hotel room. The boy is seen running back to the elevator about 30 minutes later. In a hotel room bathroom, Alotaibi blocked the door, offered the boy \$150 then doubled the amount, and forced him into oral and anal sex, the boy testified.

The Associated Press is withholding the boy's name because of his age and the nature of the allegations. □

stay hidden because of his age. The judge denied the request. The lawyer, Denise Regan, declined to comment outside court.

The tall, lanky teenager had moved to Massachu-

ing where Chism was when he skipped a team dinner Tuesday night.

"We're all just a family. It just amazes me really," Cahill said. "He wasn't violent at all. He was really the op-

said the arrest of the soft-spoken Chism didn't make sense to him.

All public schools in Danvers, about 20 miles (30 kilometers) north of Boston, were closed Wednesday. □



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Sex offender's freedom in US ends

MIKE BAKER

Associated Press

SEATTLE (AP) — For a few weeks, Michael Sean Stanley managed to cut away from a troubled life in Canada and navigate a bizarre pathway to freedom. The sex offender removed his electronic monitoring bracelet, eluded a Cana-

an apartment, lighting a crack pipe and blowing smoke in their faces and then sexually assaulting them. Parole documents also describe another case in which Stanley broke into an elderly woman's apartment while she was sleeping and sexually assaulted her.

or ask for his extradition, saying his crimes weren't serious enough.

To seek extradition would have been time-consuming and costly. If Stanley was returned and convicted, he likely would have gotten credit for time served in custody and released, Botting said.



In this image photographed from a video monitor, Michael Sean Stanley, right, appears in court with defense attorney Nick Gross, Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013, in Seattle. Days after Canadian authorities decided not to extradite Stanley, a violent sex offender who crossed into the U.S., he is in custody, suspected of sexually assaulting a 16-year-old boy.

(AP Photo/Elaine Thompson)

dian manhunt and headed for the border. He was allowed to cross into Washington state, where local authorities told the U.S. citizen to register as a sex offender but didn't arrest him, since he'd committed no crimes here.

Less than four days after registering, Stanley was accused this week of sexually assaulting a 16-year-old in a Seattle alley in a case that has caused alarm on both sides of the border and exposed a challenging dynamic of cross-border relations.

"This, for us, was the worst-case scenario," Seattle Police Det. Renee Witt said. "Our worst fear was realized when this kid came forward and said Stanley had attempted to sexually assault him."

Stanley's criminal record in Canada dates back 25 years. He most recently served a 32-month prison term after luring two mentally challenged boys into

In other cases, Stanley was found in the bedroom of two young girls, was accused of assaulting another girl and had numerous violent encounters, according to parole records. That wasn't enough to stop him at the U.S. border, because he had already served his time for his violent crimes and was only being sought for charges related to removing his monitoring bracelet. Canadian officials hadn't sought a provisional arrest warrant that would allow U.S. officials to arrest an American citizen on home soil.

Even once Stanley crossed the border, Canada could have sought such a warrant and Seattle officials could have nabbed him and sent him back, said Gary Botting, a criminal defense and extradition lawyer based in the Vancouver, British Columbia area. But in this case, Canadian authorities didn't seek that type of warrant

It could cost have the Canadian government close to \$1 million to accomplish little. On the U.S. side, a citizen who flees back to his home country must be let back in if there's no warrant to arrest him, Botting said.

"If he's an American citizen, he's home free," Botting said. Shayne Saskiw, an Alberta politician elected to the province's Legislative Assembly, said some people had argued to leave Stanley in the United States so that Canada didn't have to deal with him anymore. "I didn't feel that was right," said Saskiw, who pressed the government to seek Stanley's extradition. "I don't think it's fair to one of our close allies — the United States — to dump predators into their areas without, at a minimum, appropriate monitoring systems in place."

Witt said authorities did all they could after Stanley's arrival in the city. □

In New York, Lhota turns up the heat on de Blasio

MICHAEL M. GRYNBAUM

MICHAEL BARBARO

© 2013 New York Times

NEW YORK - His mayoral ambitions slipping away, Joseph J. Lhota shed his sleepy style to unleash a ferocious attack against Bill de Blasio on Tuesday night in an acrid debate that descended into a free-for-all of interruptions, name-calling and indignant lecturing.

Lhota, a Republican, held nothing back, warning that de Blasio, a Democrat, would "annihilate" charter schools, commit a "civil wrong" by raising taxes and take a "reckless" approach to policing. With a jab of his thumb, Lhota said that de Blasio's policies "will push us back to where we were" in New York City's grimmer days of runaway crime. De Blasio, despite his enormous lead in the polls, appeared frequently rattled by his opponent's newfound fury, shaking his head, narrowing his eyes in pique and resorting, at times, to pleas for propriety.

"I would ask Mr. Lhota to not use incendiary terms," he said, stiffly, at one point.

In the evening's most intense exchange, the candidates clashed over an advertisement by Lhota that used imagery from the 1991 Crown Heights riots to portray the Democrat as soft on crime.

"It's race baiting and it's fear mongering, and you know it," de Blasio said, adding: "Anybody who looks at that ad knows what he is up to."

Lhota shot back: "Don't tell me I threw out the race card," he said. "Bill, you cannot stoop to that level."

The hourlong debate, two weeks before voters head to the polls, seemed unlikely to realign the contours of a lopsided election. But it gave viewers a rare glimpse of an engaged and confident Lhota - the knowledgeable and straight-talking manager who had excited the city's political elites when he entered the race.

Their lecterns angled toward each other, the two men stared, pointed and seethed in a debate whose combative tone had an uneasy intimacy absent from their more staid previous encounter.

The tension made the few moments of levity all the more memorable. When the candidates both extolled a proposal by Mayor Michael R. Bloomberg to extend Lower Manhattan into the East River, in a kind of replica of Battery Park, de Blasio smiled and said he was startled by the outbreak of comity.

"We've had our kumbayah moment," he said.

The audience erupted into laughter.

The debate was the first time in an uneventful general election campaign that de Blasio found himself repeatedly forced onto the defensive. He struggled to respond when the moderator, Maurice DuBois of WCBS, pressed him on whether Gov. Andrew M. Cuomo would support his signature proposal to finance prekindergarten classes by raising taxes on the wealthy.

De Blasio offered little in the way of a substantive answer, declining to articulate an alternative way to pay for the plan, dismissing signs that the governor is leery of raising taxes and concluding, blandly: "We have to focus on the positive notion that this is what the people of New York City want."

Lhota was ready to pounce.

"Bill de Blasio makes promises over and over that he can't keep," he said, before turning to the camera and delivering an ominous prediction about higher taxes from a de Blasio administration.

"To those out there in the middle class," he said, "hold on to your wallets."

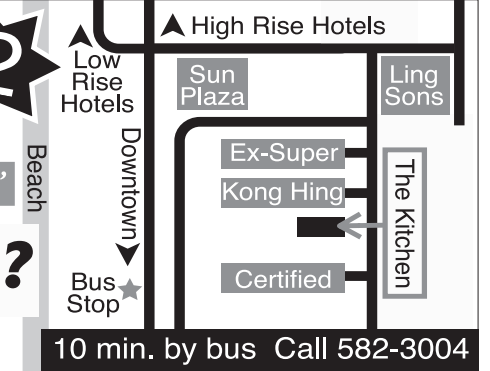
At one point, their insults acquired a literary cast. Lhota, peeved at de Blasio's repeated attempts to tie him to the tea party, cracked, "You talk about tea so much, you remind me of the Mad Hatter." □

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Boston bomb suspect may blame brother

BRIDGET MURPHY
MICHELLE R. SMITH
Associated Press

BOSTON (AP) — Dzhokhar Tsarnaev's lawyers may try to save him from the death penalty in the Boston Marathon bombing by arguing he fell under the influence of his older brother, legal experts say.

The outlines of a possible defense came into focus this week, when it was

in court papers that any evidence of Tamerlan's involvement is critical as they prepare Dzhokhar's defense.

Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, 20, faces 30 federal charges, including using a weapon of mass destruction, in the twin bombings April 15 that killed three people and injured more than 260. Tamerlan Tsarnaev, 26, died in a gun battle with police

"If I was a defense attorney and was seeking perhaps to draw attention to the influence the older brother had in planning the bombing, I would use his involvement in other crimes to show that he was likely the main perpetrator in the Boston bombing," Dieter said.

Aitan D. Goelman, who was part of the legal team that prosecuted Oklaho-



Aliana Tsarnaeva, sister of Boston Marathon bombing suspect Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, listens during a hearing in South Boston District Court, in Boston. Tsarnaev's lawyers may try to save him from the death penalty in the Boston Marathon bombing by arguing he fell under the influence of his older brother, legal experts say. (AP Photo/Mark Garfinkel)

learned that Tsarnaev's attorneys are trying to get access to investigative records implicating his brother in a triple murder in 2011. In court papers Monday, federal prosecutors acknowledged publicly that a friend of Tamerlan Tsarnaev told investigators that Tamerlan participated in the unsolved killings of three men who were found in a Massachusetts apartment with their throats slit, marijuana sprinkled over their bodies. The younger Tsarnaev's lawyers argued

days later. The government is still deciding whether to pursue the death penalty for the attack, which investigators say was retaliation for the U.S. wars in Muslim lands. Miriam Conrad, Tsarnaev's public defender, had no comment.

Richard Dieter, executive director of the Death Penalty Information Center, said the defense may be trying to show that the older brother was the guiding force and to argue that the death penalty is too extreme in this case.

ma City bombing figures Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols, said the defense may be looking to minimize the younger brother's role. "I think the mostly likely reason is that if they are arguing some kind of mitigation theory that the older brother was a monster and the younger brother was under his sway or intimidated or dominated by him," he said. Investigators have given no motive for the 2011 killings. One victim was a friend of Tamerlan Tsarnaev's. □

NY jury: Bank of America liable in mortgage fraud

LARRY NEUMEISTER
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Bank of America Corp., accused of lying about the quality of mortgages it passed along to financial firms Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac, was found liable for fraud on Wednesday in a civil case the government said captured the frenzied pursuit of profits at all costs just before the economy collapsed in 2008.

A Manhattan jury returned its verdict following a monthlong trial focusing on prime mortgages that Bank of America's Countrywide Financial unit completed in late 2007 and 2008. U.S. District Judge Jed S. Rakoff said he would determine on Thursday when a penalty phase will begin.

The verdict was returned against Bank of America, Countrywide and a former executive, Rebecca Mairone.

Bank of America, which had denied there was fraud, said Wednesday it was evaluating its options for appeal.

"The jury's decision concerned a single Countrywide program that lasted several months and ended before Bank of America's acquisition of the company," spokesman Lawrence Grayson said by email.

Mairone's lawyer Marc Mukasey called her "a model of honesty, integrity and ethics."

"She never engaged in any fraud because there was no fraud," he said.

U.S. Attorney Preet Bharara said the companies and Mairone were "liable for making disastrously bad loans and systematically removing quality checks in favor of (Bank of America and Countrywide's) balance." "In a rush to feed

at the trough of easy mortgage money on the eve of the financial crisis, Bank of America purchased Countrywide, thinking it had gobbled up a cash cow," he said in a statement. "That profit, however, was built on fraud, as the jury unanimously found."

The trial related to mortgages the government said were sold at breakneck speed without regard to quality as the economy headed into a tailspin.

The government had accused the financial institutions of urging workers to churn out loans, accept fudged applications and hide ballooning defaults.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Jamie Nawaday, in her closing argument, said the case was about "greed and lies."

"It is about people at Countrywide saying to each other that their loan quality is in the ditch, while telling Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac that their loans are investment quality," she said. Fannie and Freddie, which packaged loans into securities and sold them to investors, were effectively nationalized in 2008 when they nearly collapsed from mortgage losses.

Government lawyers said Countrywide tried to churn out more mortgage loans through a program called the Hustle, shorthand for high-speed swim lane, which operated under the motto, "Loans Move Forward, Never Backward."

The government said the program eliminated checks meant to ensure mortgages were made to borrowers unlikely to default. "The Hustle is all about speed, lightning speed and volume and never about quality," Nawaday told jurors. □

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Russia reduces charges in Greenpeace case

STEVEN LEE MYERS

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MOSCOW - Russian investigators on Wednesday dropped piracy charges against the crew members of a Greenpeace International ship who staged a protest against oil exploration in the Arctic Ocean last month, but said they would still face lesser charges of hooliganism.

The announcement by Russia's Investigative Committee appeared to be the first step toward de-escalating a growing diplomatic confrontation over the fate of the ship, the Arctic Sunrise, and the 30 crew members, activists and journalists aboard, but it did little to resolve it. All 30 are being held in the northern city of Murmansk in what Greenpeace officials describe as grim prison conditions, and they could still face prison sentences as long as seven years if convicted of hooliganism. Piracy convictions carry a maximum penalty of 15 years.

Until Wednesday evening, Russia had shown no sign

of bending to criticism from human rights and environmental organizations on the case. Only hours earlier, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had rejected an appeal by the Netherlands, where the ship is registered, to have the matter

reduction of charges, saying that the investigation was meant to stifle debate and peaceful protests. It again called for the immediate release of all the crew members. "The Arctic 30 are no more hooligans than they were pirates,"

charge that carries up to seven years in jail. It represents nothing less than an assault on the very principle of peaceful protest." The ship and its crew were seized by helicopter-borne border guards in the Pechora Sea on Sept. 19, a



Activist Dima Litvinov from Sweden looks from a defendants' cage at the district court, in Murmansk, Russia, Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013.

(AP Photo/Igor Podgorny)

resolved by a tribunal of the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea.

Greenpeace rejected the

Vladimir Chuprov, a leader of Greenpeace Russia, said in a statement. "This is still a wildly disproportionate

day after two of its activists scaled the side of Russia's first offshore oil platform in the Arctic. □

Mexico clowns distance selves from capo killer

MARK STEVENSON

Associated Press Writer

MEXICO CITY (AP) — Leaders of clowns gathered for a convention in Mexico City said Wednesday they are saddened that a killer disguised himself as a clown to kill a drug lord last week, and insisted no true member of their profession would have committed the crime.

Convicted drug trafficker Francisco Rafael Arellano Felix was shot to death Friday in the Baja beach resort of Los Cabos by a gunman wearing a clown costume, including a wig and a rubber nose.

The dead man was the eldest brother of Mexico's once-feared Arellano Felix clan.

Clown leader Tomas Morales, a 21-year veteran of the trade who goes by the stage name "Payaso Llantom," said he was certain the killer was not a professional clown.

He said clowns in Mexico, especially in outlying states, know each other and their costumes and makeup are individualized and recognizable.

"The people who do that, they're not clowns. I can swear on my mother's grave it wasn't a clown," said Morales, whose costume includes frizzy blue hair and a tiny top hat. "We are not like that ... we are nonviolent."

"Bufon Marley," the stage name of 49-year-old Alberto Villanueva, who dresses a bit like a medieval jester, said of the killer, "It's sad that it has fallen to that level."

"I don't think it has anything to do with us; we do the complete opposite," Villanueva said. □

Swiss fighter jet crashes, 2 crew missing

JOHN HEILPRIN

Associated Press

GENEVA (AP) — A Swiss fighter jet crashed in poor weather in central Switzerland on Wednesday, and the pilot and a passenger were missing with little chance they survived, the military said.

The Swiss Federal Department of Defense confirmed the F/A-18 two-seater fighter jet went down in the afternoon near a military airport in Alpnachstad in the Lake Lucerne region.

It later said in a statement that a military investigation was under way but "there is little hope that the crew

survived the accident."

Swiss Air Force Commander Lt. Aldo Schellenberg told reporters the plane was one of two F/A-18s that had taken off from the Meiringen air base in Bern canton (state) on a training mission in which they were to engage in air policing and combat.

The other plane, a one-seater, returned safely to Meiringen later.

Armed Forces Chief Lt. Gen. Andre Blattmann said the images collected so far from the crash raised fears that the two people aboard had died.

"There's no hard evidence,

but we cannot be confident," he said.

The military officials said the fighter jet was unarmed and the pilots appear to have been surprised by poor visibility when the aircraft hit a cliff overlooking Lake Alpnach.

The defense department said in a statement that the flight data recorder had not yet been found, so officials were still in the dark about details such as whether the ejector seats were activated, but all flights with the F/A-18s were temporarily suspended.

Helicopters, military and emergency services were

sent to the crash site to search for the crew and put out the fire.

A nearby railway line and road were closed.

In the late 1990s, the Swiss Air Force purchased 34 American F/A-18s from manufacturer McDonnell Douglas, now Boeing.

This is the second crash involving one of the fleet, and the 32 that remain form the core of the Swiss military's air power.

The last F/A-18 crash in the Swiss Air Force occurred in 1998 in the Swiss Alps, killing the two pilots and injuring several other people. □

Dutch push back against "Black Pete" criticism

Continued from front

On Tuesday, the chairwoman of a U.N. Human Rights Commission panel looking into the festival condemned it flatly.

"The working group does not understand why it is that people in the Netherlands cannot see that this is a throwback to slavery, and that in the 21st century this practice should stop," Verene Shepherd told television program EenVan-daag.

In stories told to children, St. Nicholas — Sinterklaas in Dutch — arrives by steamboat from Spain in mid-November accompanied by a horde of helpers: "Zwarte Pieten," or Black Petes, who have black faces, red lips and curly hair.

A public broadcaster produces a daily fictional news program about the doings of Sinterklaas and the Petes that is shown in public elementary schools for several weeks. On the evening of Dec. 5, families read poems and exchange presents to cap

the Dutch-Belgian festival that is one of the main sources of the Santa Claus traditions.

Opponents of the tradition say Pete is an offensive caricature of black people. Supporters say Pete is a positive figure whose appearance is harmless.

The traditional song refers to Pete as a "servant" to the elderly saint, but in recent years those references have largely been replaced with the idea that he is black from chimney soot as he scrambles down to deliver toys and sweets for children who leave their shoes out overnight.

Discussion about Zwarte Piet has escalated since 2011, when a prominent opponent was thrown to the ground, handcuffed by police and dragged away for wearing a T-shirt reading "Black Pete is Racism" where children might see. Opposition has been centered in Amsterdam, home to the Netherlands' largest black community. Mayor Eberhard van der Laan this month said he



In this 2012 photo, a person dressed as "Zwarte Piet" or "Black Pete" attends a parade after St. Nicholas, or Sinterklaas, arrived by boat in Amsterdam, Netherlands.

(AP Photo/ Margriet Faber)

would support changing Pete's appearance — but only gradually, as it has changed over time in the past.

"If it appears that Amsterdammers feel pain as a result of this tradition, that's a good reason for new development," he said.

Organizers of the festival

and the broadcaster also said they would be open to changes if people want them.

The latest public figure to speak out against the tradition was none other than the (white) man who has played the part of "Head Pete" on the Sinterklaas news program for more

than a decade. His commentary appeared in a top Dutch newspaper Tuesday, entitled "Make me less black and less a servant."

Others to question the tradition include Victoria's Secret model Doutzen Kroes and many of the country's prominent thinkers and black celebrities.

But their campaign has failed to draw widespread support and the overwhelming majority of Dutch people don't want change. "Message for the U.N.: Isn't there a war somewhere, starvation or genocide going on that you could better be concerned about?" Dutchman Peter Udo commented on the Facebook page, drawing more than 2,000 likes. Asked about the issue at his weekly press conference, Prime Minister Mark Rutte said it isn't his place to intervene in a folk tradition. "Black Pete: The name says it already. He's black," he said. "I can't change much about it." □

Merkel calls Obama to complain about surveillance

JOHN-THOR DAHLBURG
Associated Press

BERLIN (AP) — German Chancellor Angela Merkel complained to President Barack Obama on Wednesday after learning that U.S. intelligence may have targeted her mobile phone, saying that would be "a serious breach of trust" if confirmed.

For its part, the White House denied that the U.S. is listening in on Merkel's phone calls now. "The president assured the chancellor that the United States is not monitoring and will

not monitor the communications of the chancellor," White House spokesman Jay Carney said. "The United States greatly values our close cooperation with Germany on a broad range of shared security challenges." However, Carney did not specifically say that that U.S. had never monitored or obtained Merkel's communications. The German government said it responded after receiving "information that the chancellor's cellphone may be monitored" by U.S. intelligence. □

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Canadian weed finds export market in Asia

CHRIS BRUMMITT
Associated Press

HANOI, Vietnam (AP) —

For the young Vietnamese dope smokers rolling up outside a smart Hanoi cafe, local cannabis is just not good enough. As with their Adidas caps, iPhones and Sanskrit tattoos, so with their choice of bud: only foreign will do.

Potent marijuana grown indoors in Canada and the United States is easy to buy in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City, say regular smokers, and sells for up to 10 times the price of locally grown weed. That's perhaps surprising given that marijuana is easy to cultivate regionally, and bringing drugs across continents is expensive and risky.

Some experts say the trade can be explained by the dominant role Vietnamese diaspora gangs play in cultivating the drug in Western countries, making sourcing the product and smuggling it to Vietnam an easier proposition than it might be otherwise.

The characteristics of cannabis use in the country also drive the trade. The drug is used mostly by foreigners and well-heeled Vietnamese, who are prepared to pay for quality. Vietnamese have long shown preferences for imported goods of all kinds — and it appears cannabis is no exception.

Regardless of the reasons, its availability in Vietnam is a sign of how hydroponic growing techniques have shaken up the global marijuana business. In the 1960s and 70s, marijuana went from plantations in coun-

tries such as Thailand, India and Morocco to wealthy consumer markets in the West. Now, many Western countries are self-sufficient in the weed because of indoor cultivation, and export is on the agenda.

Western-grown cannabis is also appearing in Japan and South Korea. Unlike Vietnam, both are wealthy, developed na-

sterdam." But as the tightly rolled joints went round, they struggled to explain why Western weed was available.

"Some people raise cows," said one, a tattoo shop owner with a passion for big bikes and Facebook. "Other people prefer to buy steak at the market." Like other smokers interviewed for this story, he

was unaware that Canadian-grown weed was showing up in Vietnam but that it could be explained.

"The quality and reputation of the Canadian cannabis is such that it could be worth the trouble and cost of importing," he said. "The diaspora connections probably make this easier and cheaper than it normally would."



A man rolls a joint with Canadian-grown marijuana at his room in the old quarter area of Hanoi, Vietnam. Western-grown marijuana is available in Vietnam and popular among its elite, a result of its passion for imported products and the widespread involvement of Vietnamese diaspora gangs in the cultivation of marijuana in North America and Europe.

(AP Photo/Na Son Nguyen).

tions with climates ill-suited to cultivation. They too have seen a shift in supply from countries in the region such as India and Thailand to North America and Europe, law enforcement authorities there say.

The smokers sitting outside the Hanoi cafe, a short walk from the city's famed French-era Opera House, seemed proud they were able to buy foreign, expensive buds, boasting their city was like a "mini Am-

sterdam." declined to give his name because cannabis is illegal in Vietnam.

Vietnamese diaspora criminal gangs got into the marijuana cultivation business in North America in the 1980s. Having found a niche, they expanded and now account for much of the business across Europe also. Martin Bouchard, a professor in criminology at Canada's Simon Fraser University and expert in the cannabis trade, said he

Smokers said one gram of Canadian retails for anything up to 45 dollars, the average weekly wage in the country. Mid quality hydroponically grown marijuana sells for about 10 dollars a gram in the United States and Canada.

Smokers, quoting dealers, said some of the weed comes into the country via the northern port in Haiphong, a city that has a reputation for the import and export of illegal goods

as well as the laundering of drug profits by diaspora growing gangs. Other channels included smuggling by flight crew in liquor boxes or the postal service. "They charge a ridiculous premium, but the quality compared to the local stuff is ridiculously different," said one expatriate English teacher who before arriving in Vietnam had worked for seven months on a farm for medical marijuana in California. "It's good for special occasions."

There are no public statistics on cannabis use in Vietnam, but it is a niche product without a long history of use like say in India. The drug's well documented use by American soldiers during the Vietnam War is credited by some for introducing or popularizing it.

Speaking after a U.N.-organized media conference on drug use in Vietnam and elsewhere in Asia, Lt. Gen. Do Kim Tuyen, a deputy director general at the Ministry of Public Security, said he was unaware of details of the cannabis trade in Vietnam.

Canadian police didn't directly answer questions on the flow into Vietnam, but said in a statement they were committed to "directing attention and resources to combating the illegal drug trade both domestically and internationally."

Tun Nay Soe, an expert at the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime in Thailand, put the business down to the social cachet of using imported, better quality product. □

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Backers spring Haiti lawyer in corruption cases

TRENTON DANIEL

Associated Press

PORT-AU-PRINCE, Haiti

(AP) — Supporters of an opposition figure who has brought corruption cases against Haiti's government whisked him away from a courthouse Wednesday as he awaited a hearing after being detained by police. Attorney Andre Michel was meeting with a judge and prosecutor when supporters broke into the courtroom office and pushed him past police and security guards to the bar association's office near the courthouse.

Shortly afterward, legislator Arnel Belizaire and other supporters put Michel into a black SUV with tinted windows and official license plates. The car drove down the street to Parliament, which was closed to journalists. Haitian law bars police from stopping cars with official license plates. Michel was taken away



Attorney Andre Michel is flanked by two Haitian senators as he is taken away from the courthouse to a waiting vehicle, in Port-au-Prince Haiti, Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013. Supporters of Michel who has brought corruption cases against Haiti's government whisked him away from a courthouse Wednesday as he awaited a hearing after being detained by police.

(AP Photo/Dieu Nalio Chery)

from the courthouse as the judge prepared to serve an order that he be transferred to the state penitentiary. Prosecutors did not say publicly why Michel was

arrested.

But Marie Yolene Gilles, assistant program director of the National Human Rights Defense Network, a civil rights group, said that she saw the police record

against Michel and that he initially was stopped because of a minor traffic violation. It wasn't clear how she got to look at the papers.

The detention of the prom-

inent lawyer prompted Senate President Simon Dieuseul Desras, a critic of President Michel Martelly, to call for an emergency session of legislators to discuss the arrest.

Michel is one of the few attorneys in Haiti who takes on legal cases critical of Martelly's government, and he also has taken a case involving a student fatally shot by police.

Michel serves as secretary-general of a coalition of opposition political parties called Group 77.

Dozens of his supporters shut down several blocks in downtown Port-au-Prince by putting up burning barricades and forcing truck drivers to abandon their vehicles in the street.

Supporters also showed up at the courthouse and demanded the president's resignation as riot police stood guard.

"What happened to Michel was not an arrest — it was a kidnapping," Sen. Pierre Francky Exius told reporters.

A Martelly spokesman could not be reached for comment. Police declined to comment on the case.

This is not the first time that Haiti's executive branch has faced accusations of intervening in the judiciary. Two years ago, Belizaire, the deputy who accompanied Michel into the SUV, was locked up by police even though he enjoys immunity as a lawmaker.

U.S. Vice President Joe Biden called Martelly on Wednesday and the two talked about Haiti's legislative and local elections, now two years overdue, and the need to maintain a "strong and independent legislative branch," according to a government statement.

It didn't mention Michel's detention. □

Dominican citizenship ruling under fire

BEN

EZEQUIEL LOPEZ

Associated Press

LOS JOVILLOS, Dominican Republic (AP) —

In a house with no running water surrounded by vast stretches of sugar cane, Abelinda Yisten Debel studies for a high school graduation exam she might not be allowed to take. It's not just her diploma that's uncertain. The 19-year-old Yisten also faces the prospect of not being able to marry, get a formal job, or go to a public hospital if she gets sick. She is one of an estimated 200,000 people who were born in the Dominican Republic and now may lose their citizenship, and the rights that go along with it, because of a

FOX

recent Constitutional Court decision.

The court ruled that people who were born in the Dominican Republic to parents who were neither citizens nor legal residents are not automatically entitled to citizenship under a new constitution adopted in 2010. The effects of the decision are retroactive, and come as a particular shock to people like Yisten, who has rarely ventured beyond the dirt streets of her village and never traveled farther than the capital. "It's sad because I'm not a foreigner. I'm from here," she said at her home — two rooms in a concrete barracks-like structure, built by the government for sugar workers, where 10 fami-

lies share a bathroom.

Many in her central Dominican village, Los Jovillos, and across the country are waiting to learn their fate, some afraid to leave the house for fear they may be deported by immigration authorities — most likely to Haiti since most are of Haitian descent — because they have no papers. Some have lived in the Dominican Republic for generations. "If they grab me, I'll be in trouble because I don't know where I would go. I've never even been to Haiti," said Juliana Deguis Pierre, the woman whose legal challenge resulted in the Constitutional Court ruling Sept. 23.

The court ordered the government and the Electoral

Council to compile a list within two years of people who should be stripped of their Dominican birth certificate and identification card, known as a cedula, a document issued at age 18 that is required to participate in any public activity, from holding a job to casting a ballot. Now, fear and uncertainty grip many in the country of 10 million. The government has said it will come up with a path to legal residency, but no details have been released. It may not come in time to help those whose papers have already been confiscated. President Danilo Medina has expressed sympathy for those affected but not said how, or if, he will help them. □

Spain's recession over - cold comfort for jobless

ALAN CLENDENNING

CIARAN GILES

Associated Press

MADRID (AP) — Spain's crushing two-year recession ended in the third quarter, the central bank said Wednesday. But the reality on the ground remained grim, with unemployment expected to take years to drop from record highs and the young emigrating to find a future. Preliminary figures show Spain's economy grew 0.1 percent from July through September compared with the previous quarter. The

one that went to Greece. Even Microsoft co-founder Bill Gates showed some faith in the country's future by buying a stake this week in a Spanish construction company. Still, experts say the country is just one step along the way toward a meaningful recovery. The unemployment rate, which is due to be updated Thursday for the third quarter, is at a stunning 26.3 percent. "Spain is out of the woods in terms of a worst case scenario of needing a full bailout, but it's going to be

decade. The current uptick is due to exporters that make cars, auto components, steel, women's clothing and agricultural goods — products that have benefited from the country's painful drive to cut wages and increasing global demand. Spain also saw a strong summer tourism season, with many travelers spooked away from countries like Egypt and Turkey amid social unrest. But most of Spain's exporters are large companies. The small- and medium-

meager 0.7 percent. Independent analysts are more pessimistic, with some predicting the economy will go into reverse. "The government's optimism is based on indicators of improvements in Spain's financial state but not on improvements in the real economy on the ground," said Javier Flores, an analyst with the Asinver investment group. "Is the recession over? Yes, from an academic point of view. But has the crisis being suffered by Spaniards ended? No." Creating the most pain in

ECB launches major review of big banks

DAVID McHUGH

AP Business Writer

FRANKFURT, Germany (AP)

— The European Central Bank is launching a review of 128 of the eurozone's biggest banks, a push to restore faith in the financial system — and lay the groundwork for growth — after similar studies fell short.

The review will be a key test of the ECB's credibility as it prepares to take over as the European Union's banking supervisor. Previous stress tests carried out in 2009 and 2011 by another agency with more limited powers, the European Banking Authority, cleared several banks that were in need of rescuing soon after.

Europe's slow progress in cleaning up the banks contrasts with the United States. There, officials moved early to make banks strengthen their financial buffers in the wake of the 2008 collapse of investment bank Lehman Brothers.

The ECB announced Wednesday that its review of the banks will begin next month and take a year. Working with national regulators, ECB officials will take a broad look at the banks' holdings and financial strength. In particular, they will look for hidden losses such as loans to businesses and real estate projects that are unlikely to be repaid.

The ECB's review will be followed by a stress test that would simulate bank losses in a sudden economic downturn or financial crisis, conducted along with the European Banking Authority.

The question is whether that stress test will be more credible than the previous ones.

Thomas Huertas, a partner in a unit of Ernst & Young, said they probably would because the ECB will have already reviewed the banks' balance sheets before conducting the test — something the EBA was not able to do before. □



John Jairo Nanez Betancur, 34 years old, right, from Colombia, cries and hugs a member of the Victims' Mortgage Platform (PAH) after the postponement of his eviction in Madrid, Spain. Nanez Betancur became unemployed after losing his job. He bought a euro 213,000 (\$ 291,360) apartment by taking a mortgage with Bankia bank in 2005 but stopped paying due to his financial situation in 2010. The eviction was finally postponed with the help of the Victims' Mortgage Platform (PAH).

(AP Photo/Andres Kudacki)

growth blip, expected to be confirmed Oct. 30 by the national statistics agency, was driven by stronger exports after the economy declined for nine straight quarters. The government has been trumpeting that the recession would end soon because of reforms and tough austerity measures that it says has helped convince investors Spain is a much safer bet than it was a year ago, when it came close to needing a national bailout like the

a very long-term recovery. Unemployment is going to continue to be very high for a number of years," said Antonio Barroso, an analyst with the London-based Teneo Intelligence consulting firm. Spain has been in and out of recession for most of the past four years and significant growth is a distant memory that came to a halt in 2008 with the international financial crisis and the implosion of Spain's building boom that had lasted for more than a

sized companies that account for more than half of the economy are more exposed to the weak domestic market. And banks, many of which have needed rescuing over the past three years, are too afraid to give them the loans needed to expand operations and hire workers. Despite the emergence from recession, the government predicts the economy will shrink 1.3 percent for 2013 as a whole. Next year, it is forecast to grow a

Spain is the worst jobless rate in the European Union after Greece. For people under age 25, it is a stunning 56 percent, prompting many to emigrate to Britain, Germany and Latin America for work. And Spain's export success hasn't translated into many new jobs because the new business only emerged after companies "cut costs to the bone," said Gayle Allard, a labor market specialist with Madrid's IE Business School. □



Glitz Casino is open at La Cabana Beach Resort!



EAGLE BEACH - Lady Luck moved into Aruba's Glitz Casino at La Cabana Beach Resort, Eagle Beach. The casino is open to the general public daily from 10 am to 4 a.m. Glitz Casino is located inside the lobby of La Cabana Beach Resort and Casino. The casino floor with much "ambiance" is populated with 200 of the

most modern and liberal slot machines and video poker machines, many with link progressives! And if table games are what you like, there are nine table games to choose from, including Blackjack, Roulette, Baccarat and the ALL NEW Pyramid Stud Jackpot Poker. The Glitz Casino offers a daily Bingo game from Monday to Sunday starting



at 1p.m. with a one of a kind "Bingo Bongo" Bonus paid twice daily during the Tuesday to Sunday games. A live and Kiosk Sportbook is offered so you can bet on your favorite teams on virtually any sporting event. You can watch the games on the Liquid Lounge HD Big Screen TV's and enjoy your favorite beverage.

The Casino also features an all new Entertainment venue for Aruba, The Liquid Lounge, with a sunken bar, a state of the art sound system with lighting to suit every mood. The lighted ceiling is synchronized to the music and it dances to every beat. The bar offers 12 multi game slot machines with video slots, video poker, video Keno and video Blackjack. Play from 5¢ to \$5 and on some poker slot machines Glitz offers the only bar-top progressive on the island. The Liquid Lounge's expert

bartenders can create any special drink and serve up a storm during the many nights when there is Entertainment from some of the most popular live band from the island. Every Tuesday and Friday the Giovanni Trim Karaoke Show takes center stage, participate or relax and enjoy the best impersonator artists such as Stevie Wonder, Frank Sinatra, Bob Marley and Michael Jackson sing and dance to their many hits. So, come and join us at Glitz Casino and "Feel the Vibe"! □





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ISA hosts grand opening of its “World Languages & Art Complex”



WAYACA - The International School of Aruba celebrated its grand opening of the “World Languages & Art Complex” located in Wayaca.

Together with Sarah Putnam, the head of the International School, our Prime Minister Mike Eman, Mr. Roger Hove, ISA Board Chair & President of International School Services (ISS) the International school of Aruba and many invited guests, the ribbon was officially cut in order to open up the newest addition to the school: the World Languages & Art Complex”. Champagne, wine and many snacks were offered by a well dressed staff to celebrate this grand event and live guitar music in the back ground was provided by: Ernesto Ferro.

Mr. Roger Hove, now residing in New Jersey, with over 30 year of experience

in education: background experiences as a teacher, principal, business manager and head of school was pleased and proud to be here on Aruba.

Mr. Hove served hundreds of schools all around the world like in Libya, Malaysia, Norway and Dubai. At the moment he is focusing on Aruba and two sister schools being on the Cayman Island and in China.

“Extraordinary” was the word Mr. Hove motioned when he spoke about the International School in Aruba. From a wonderful campus to caring teachers who teach with their hearts and eager to learn students, this community really came together and cares, which shows in their involvement. Hard work and dedication from both teachers to the government of Aruba in order to get our children the best education possible, making this a better world.

**Beauty
On The
Beach**

Emily Graham

She is from New Jersey, USA. It is her first time in Aruba and she is on her honeymoon.





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- Picture taken by Rossi Wauben.

The Troupial: Certainly one of most striking of Aruba's native birds, the "Trupial" is a large oriole with sharply contrasting bright orange and black pattern, with bright blue around the eye and at the base of the bill.



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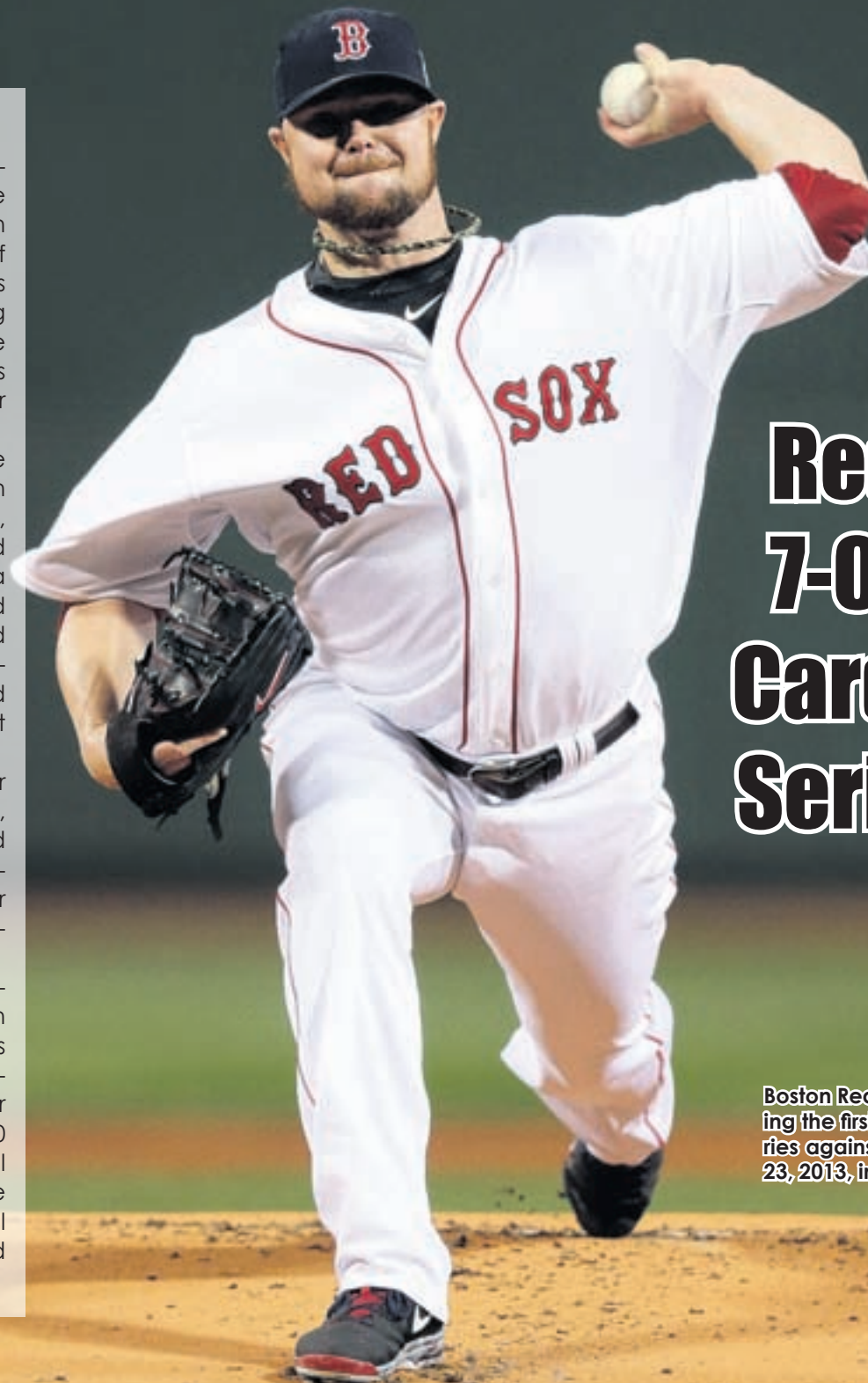




By **RONALD BLUM**
AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) - Mike Napoli hit a three-run double in the first, and the Boston Red Sox took advantage of a reversed call by umpires and sloppy St. Louis fielding to take a 7-0 lead over the Cardinals after eight innings of the World Series opener on Wednesday night. Carlos Beltran prevented the game from becoming even more of an early blowout, reaching over the right-field wall to rob David Ortiz of a grand slam in the second inning. Playing in the World Series for the first time in a 16-year career, Beltran bruised ribs on his right side and left the game an inning later. St. Louis, one of the major league's top-fielding teams, looked more like the Bad News Bears than slick glove-men as they started their second Series in three seasons. Second baseman Pete Kozma dropped a throw for an error that set up Napoli's big hit, pitcher Adam Wainwright and catcher Yadier Molina allowed a popup 40 feet from home plate to fall between them for a single and Kozma let a bouncer roll out of his glove for a second error.

Continued on Page 20



Red Sox take 7-0 lead over Cards in World Series opener

Boston Red Sox starting pitcher Jon Lester throws during the first inning of Game 1 of baseball's World Series against the St. Louis Cardinals Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013, in Boston.

Associated Press



3x-U.S. figure skating champ Weir retires

NEW YORK (AP) — Known as much for his outrageous costumes and comments

In this Jan. 14, 2006 file photo, Johnny Weir shows off his gold medal after winning the mens free skate event at the U.S. Figure Skating Championships in St. Louis.

Associated Press

as his intriguing skating, three-time U.S. figure skating champion Johnny Weir retired from competition Wednesday. Weir, who competed for 16 years, won the 2004, '05 and '06 U.S. titles and finished fifth at the 2006 Olympics and sixth in 2010.

Weir said he was inspired to become a figure skater by watching the great Russians perform. He was coached to much of his competitive success by Soviet-trained Galina Zmievskaya. He is married to a Russian, Victor Voronov. "I am outlandish and

flamboyant and all those things," Weir said. "There was a focus on all that in my career, which I am fine with, but there also was a little attention paid to how hard I actually worked and how much went into it and how I came back so many times." □

Vonn puts off return from knee surgery for a month

ANDREW DAMPF
AP Sports Writer

Still recovering from right knee surgery, Lindsey Vonn has decided not to race in Saturday's Olympic ski season kickoff in Austria but says she will be back next month.

Vonn has been training on the glacier in Soelden for the last week and made her decision on Wednesday.

She'll return at her home races in Beaver Creek, Colorado, from Nov. 29-Dec. 1.

She says, "While I physically feel great, I have decided to not race this weekend and instead will focus on returning in Beaver Creek. I am confident the extra month of training will ultimately put me in the best position to have a successful season."

Vonn shredded her anterior cruciate and medial collateral ligaments in a crash at the world champi-

onships in Schladming last February.

The Olympic downhill champion and four-time overall World Cup winner hopes to be back in top form for the Sochi Olympics in February.

Vonn had originally targeted Beaver Creek for her return but then she said last month she was thinking of racing the giant slalom in Soelden after a solid training camp in Portillo, Chile, in August.

"By the end of the camp she was skiing super-G and GS like nothing really happened," U.S. women's head coach Alex Hoedlmoser told The Associated Press last week.

Vonn won the giant slalom in Soelden two years ago although GS is far from her best event.

Vonn has won three career World Cup giant slaloms to go with her 29 in downhill, 20 in super-G, two in slalom and five in combined. She



Lindsey Vonn, girlfriend of United States team player Tiger Woods walks the course during the single matches at the Presidents Cup golf tournament at Muirfield Village Golf Club Sunday, Oct. 6, 2013, in Dublin, Ohio.

Associated Press

needs only three more wins to match Austrian great Annemarie Moser-Proell's record of 62 World Cup race victories.

Last season, Tina Maze of Slovenia won in Soelden and went on to take the overall World Cup title with a record point total.

The U.S. team says its starters for Soelden will be 2006 Olympic GS champion Julia Mancuso, reigning slalom World Cup winner Mikaela Shiffrin, and Megan McJames.

The U.S. men's starters are highlighted by two-time defending Soelden champion Ted Ligety and two-time overall World Cup winner Bode Miller.

Ligety won by a massive 2.75-second margin in Soelden last season, when he went on to win six of eight World Cup GS races. "Soelden is an incredible place to start the season," Ligety said. □

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World Series

Continued from Page 18

Dustin Pedroia's RBI single made it 4-0 in the second, and Ortiz wound up with a sacrifice fly on Beltran's web gem.

Jon Lester, who earned the win that finished Boston's four-game sweep of Colorado in 2007, allowed one hit and struck out four in the first three innings.

As the World Series returned to 101-year-old Fenway Park, the oldest stadium in the major leagues, the Red Sox were looking to extend their Series winning streak to nine - quite a reverse for a supposedly cursed franchise that didn't win a title from 1918 until sweeping the Cardinals in 2004. This has turned into a traditional Series matchup, with the Cardinals winning in 1946 and 1967 before Boston's big win nearly a decade ago.

Wainwright, who had the



St. Louis Cardinals' Pete Kozma can't handle a throw as Boston Red Sox's Dustin Pedroia slides into second during the first inning of Game 1 of baseball's World Series Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013, in Boston.

Associated Press

Carpenter made a back-hand flip to Kozma, who while returning to the base allowed the ball to bounce off the edge of his glove's webbing and fall to the ground.

Second base umpire Dana DeMuth called Pedroia out on a force, indicating the ball was dropped by Kozma while he was making the transfer to his throwing hand. Red Sox manager John Farrell came out to argue.

All six umpires huddled near shortstop to discuss the play, and crew chief John Hirschbeck walked toward the Cardinals dug-out and told manager

St. Louis Cardinals' Pete Kozma can't handle a throw as Boston Red Sox's Dustin Pedroia slides into second during the first inning of Game 1 of baseball's World Series Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013, in Boston.

Associated Press

Red Sox undecided on Series Games 3, 4 pitchers

AP Sports Writer

BOSTON (AP) — Boston Red Sox manager John Farrell hasn't decided on his exact pitching rotation beyond Game 2 of the World Series.

Farrell said before the opener against the Cardinals on Wednesday night that Clay Buchholz and Jake Peavy will pitch Games 3 and 4 after the Series moves to St. Louis. But he's not sure what order they'll go in. Buchholz gave up five runs in eight innings and two runs in five innings in his AL championship series starts; Peavy gave up seven runs in three innings in his only ALCS start. Asked before the World Series opener whether Buchholz had an injury, he said, "Not to the point of keeping him out of starting." Farrell said he wanted to see the Cardinals in the first two games; it also could be influenced by whether it looks as if the Red Sox would need their Game 3 starter to come back for a potential seventh game.



St. Louis Cardinals' Michael Wacha adjust his hat during practice before Game 1 of baseball's World Series against the Boston Red Sox Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013, in Boston.

Associated Press

Jon Lester started against St. Louis' Adam Wainwright in Game 1, with John Lackey scheduled to go for Boston against Michael Wacha in Game 2 on Thursday night at Fenway Park. St. Louis is expected to start Joe Kelly and Lance Lynn in Games 3 and 4. Wacha, a rookie whom the Cardinals obtained with a compensatory draft pick

when Albert Pujols signed with the Angels, was 4-1 with a 2.78 ERA in the regular season, spending part of the year with Triple-A Springfield. He is 3-0 with a 0.43 ERA in the postseason. "I want the ball in big situations. There's none bigger than the World Series," Wacha said. "And so I'm excited about getting it and I think every guy on our team wants the ball in these kinds of situations." When he found out he would be pitching Game 2 in Fenway Park — his first time in the ballpark — it created a whole bunch of new things to be excited — and worried — about.

"This is kind of a tricky little ballpark with the dimensions and that kind of stuff. One pitch can really kind of change a game," he said. "You try not to think too much about it, just try to approach it just like any other game, any other stadium. And that's just making pitches down in the zone and try not to give them too much of a chance to lift it." □



St. Louis Cardinals' Carlos Beltran leaps to catch a long fly ball hit by Boston Red Sox's David Ortiz during the second inning of Game 1 of baseball's World Series Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013, in Boston.

Associated Press

third-fewest walks per nine innings in the major leagues this season, opened the game by walking Jacoby Ellsbury, and Pedroia singled to center with one out. The game turned on Boston's fourth batter. Ortiz hit a slow bouncer to second baseman Matt Carpenter that had an outside chance of being turned into an inning-ending double play.

Mike Matheny that Pedroia was being called safe. Matheny then argued to no avail.

Three pitches later, Napoli lined a cutter up the gap in left-center for a bases-clearing double.

Under rules changes contemplated for next season, calls such as this would be subject to video review. It got worse for the Cardinals in the second. □

Kessel's trick rallies Leafs to win over Ducks

The Associated Press

TORONTO (AP) — Phil Kessel scored three goals as Toronto rallied from a two-goal deficit to beat Anaheim 4-2 Tuesday night and deny the Ducks a club record eighth straight win. NHL Capsules It was a Jekyll and Hyde performance for the Maple Leafs, who were booed off the ice after a woeful first period that saw them outplayed, outshot 6-2 and outscored 1-0. Kessel struck twice in the second period sandwiched around a goal by Dion Phaneuf. Kessel completed his hat trick at 8:11 of the third period.

Kessel, whose offense had been sporadic at best this season, upped his goal total to five. The Leafs' sniper had a chance to go for a fourth late in the game but chose to pass it to linemate Tyler Bozak, who failed to convert.

Nick Bonino and Mathieu Perreault scored for Anaheim.

CAPITALS 5, JETS 4, SO

WINNIPEG, Manitoba (AP)

— Martin Erat scored the winner in the sixth round of the shootout and Washington escaped with a victory over Winnipeg.

Alex Ovechkin had two goals and an assist for the Capitals, and Mikhail Grabovski and Troy Brouwer also scored.

Bryan Little struck twice for Winnipeg, including the tying score in the third period, and Grant Clitsome and Blake Wheeler also scored. The Jets wrapped up a six-game homestand, their longest of the season. Andrew Ladd had three assists.

The Jets outshot the Capitals 47-32 and created most of the best scoring opportunities, including a short-handed two-on-one thanks to Dustin Byfuglien.

CANUCKS 5, ISLANDERS 4, OT

UNIONDALE, New York (AP)

— Brad Richardson banked in a shot off goalie Evgeni Nabokov 2:16 into overtime to lift rallying Vancouver over the New York.

The Canucks weren't dismayed by allowing the ty-

ing goal to Frans Nielsen with 1:12 left in regulation, and skated off with a win. Richardson flung the puck in front and it found its way past Nabokov on Vancouver's 33rd shot.

With Nabokov pulled, Nielsen fired the rebound of defenseman Andrew MacDonald's shot into the open left side of the net, past the outstretched glove of Roberto Luongo to tie it at 4. Chris Higgins had given the Canucks their first lead of the game — 4-3 — with 17.2 seconds left in the second.

Ryan Kesler, Daniel Sedin and Henrik Sedin also scored for Vancouver.

Matt Moulson had two goals and Brock Nelson also scored for the Islanders.

BLACKHAWKS 3, PANTHERS 2, SO

SUNRISE, Florida (AP)

— Jonathan Toews and Patrick Sharp each scored in the shootout to lead Chicago to victory over Florida.

Toews also scored in regulation, Bryan Bickell added a goal and Corey Crawford made 20 saves.

Sharp beat goalie Jacob Markstrom on the glove side for the deciding goal. The Blackhawks have won five of their past six games and extended their point streak to six games.

Florida has lost four of its last five games and has lost to Chicago four straight times. Dmitry Kulikov and Tomas Fleischmann scored for the Panthers and Tim Thomas stopped 25 shots before leaving with 2:59 left in the game due to an apparent lower body injury. Markstrom entered the game and made two saves.

BLUE JACKETS 4, DEVILS 1

COLUMBUS, Ohio (AP)

— Sergei Bobrovsky stopped 24 shots and James Wisniewski had a goal and two assists to lead Columbus to victory over struggling New Jersey.

The loss dropped the Devils to 0-5-2 on the road and 1-5-3 on the season.

Brandon Dubinsky had a goal and an assist, and Cam Atkinson and Marian

Gaborik also scored for the Blue Jackets, who won for the second time at home after four consecutive losses. They are 13-3-3 in their last 19 home games.

The Devils led 1-0 after Michael Ryder's power-play goal in the second period, but Dubinsky responded with a man-advantage goal. Atkinson and Wisniewski, still battling the flu, each added unassisted goals.

OILERS 4, CANADIENS 3

MONTREAL (AP)

— Jeff Petry and Ryan Jones scored in the third period to lift Edmonton past Montreal.

Ales Hemsky and Ladislav Smid also scored for Edmonton, while Devan Dubnyk made 29 saves.

Tomas Plekanec, Brendan Gallagher and Brian Gionta scored for Montreal. Carey Price stopped 28 shots.

After Plekanec and Gallagher gave Montreal a 2-0 lead in the first period, Edmonton scored four consecutive goals to take control. Hemsky and Smid scored 2:47 apart in the second period to tie it with about 4½ minutes left in the period. Petry put Edmonton ahead for good at 7:59 of the third and Jones made it 4-2 nearly 2 minutes later.

WILD 2, PREDATORS 0

ST. PAUL, Minnesota (AP)

— Josh Harding stopped 16 shots for his first shutout of the season in Minnesota's victory over Nashville.

Justin Fontaine scored late in the second period and Jason Pominville added an empty-net tally for the Wild, who have scored just seven goals in the past five games.

Pekka Rinne made 27 saves for Nashville, which failed to get a point for the first time in six games. The Predators have allowed just five goals in regulation the last four games, going 2-1-1 in that stretch.

Minnesota played with just five defensemen much of the game after losing top-line defenseman Jonas Brodin less than 5 minutes into the game when a dump-in by Gabriel Bourque hit Brodin in the face. □



Columbus Blue Jackets' Brandon Dubinsky, right, scores against New Jersey Devils goalie Cory Schneider during the second period of an NHL hockey game in Columbus, Ohio, Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2013.

Associated Press

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OCTOBER 24 - 30

JOHNNY KNOXVILLE | JACKSON NICOLL

BAD GRANDPA

MON - THURS 8:30
FRI - SAT 8:30 | 10:45
SUN & HOL 8:30

MON - THURS 5:00 | 7:15 | 9:30
FRI 5:00 | 7:15 | 9:30 | 11:45
SAT 2:45 | 5:00 | 7:15 | 9:30 | 11:45
SUN & HOL 2:45 | 5:00 | 7:15 | 9:30

BRAD PITT | CAMERON DIAZ

THE COUNSELOR

MON - THURS 4:10 | 6:45 | 9:30
FRI 4:10 | 6:45 | 9:30 | 11:50
SAT 1:50 | 4:10 | 6:45 | 9:30 | 11:50
SUN & HOL 1:50 | 4:10 | 6:45 | 9:30

ROBIN BOISSEVAIN | DORUS WITTE

SPIJT!

WITH DUTCH SUBTITLES [PG-13]

MON - THURS 4:00 | 6:15
FRI 4:00 | 6:15
SAT 1:50 | 4:00 | 6:15
SUN & HOL 1:50 | 4:00 | 6:15

CHLOE GRACE MORETZ | JULIANNE MOORE

CARRIE

MON - THURS 4:40 | 7:00 | 9:20
FRI 4:40 | 7:00 | 9:20 | 11:40
SAT 2:20 | 4:40 | 7:00 | 9:20 | 11:40
SUN & HOL 2:20 | 4:40 | 7:00 | 9:20

BYSTHER VERLORNE | ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER

ESCAPE

MON - THURS 4:00 | 6:30 | 9:00
FRI 4:00 | 6:30 | 9:00 | 11:30
SAT 2:00 | 4:00 | 6:30 | 9:00 | 11:30
SUN & HOL 2:00 | 4:00 | 6:30 | 9:00

SANDRA BULLOCK | GEORGE CLOONEY

GRAVITY

3D VERSION [PG-13]

MON - THURS 4:50 | 7:00 | 9:10
FRI 4:50 | 7:00 | 9:10 | 11:20
SAT 2:40 | 4:50 | 7:00 | 9:10 | 11:20
SUN & HOL 2:40 | 4:50 | 7:00 | 9:10

TOM HANKS | BARKHAD ABDI

CAPTAIN PHILLIPS

[PG-13]

MON - FRI 4:00 | 6:30 | 9:15
SAT, SUN & HOL 2:45 | 6:30 | 9:15

BILL HADER | ANNA FARIS

CLOUDY WITH A CHANCE OF MEATBALLS 2

3D VERSION WITH SPANISH SUBTITLES [PG]

MON - THURS 4:10 | 6:20 | 8:30
FRI 4:10 | 6:20 | 8:30 | 10:40
SAT 2:00 | 4:10 | 6:20 | 8:30 | 10:40
SUN & HOL 2:00 | 4:10 | 6:20 | 8:30

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Williams beats Radwanska at WTA Championships

NESHA STARCEVIC

AP Sports Writer

ISTANBUL (AP) — Top-ranked Serena Williams overcame Agnieszka Radwanska 6-2, 6-4 for her second win in two matches at the WTA Championships on Wednesday and all but sealed a spot in the semi-finals.

Jelena Jankovic topped second-ranked Victoria Azarenka 6-4, 6-3 in her first match at the tournament and fourth-seeded Li Na opened her campaign with a 6-3, 7-6 (5) victory over Sara Errani.

Williams cruised in the first set but ran into some trouble in the second against a player she had never lost to in seven previous matches. "She definitely played pretty well. But, you know, I can always look to improve on some things. My serve wasn't as good today as it was yesterday, but you can't expect it to be great every day," Williams said.

Radwanska wasted three break points at the start of the set and dropped her serve in the fourth game. She broke right back and leveled at 3-3, but Williams pounced on her serve again in the final game, winning the match with a backhand winner.

Radwanska has won just one set of 17 she has played against Williams overall - in the 2012 Wimbledon final. She has now dropped both round-robin



Serena Williams of the USA shouts after she returned a shot to Agnieszka Radwanska of Poland during their tennis match at the WTA championship in Istanbul, Turkey, Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013. The world's top female tennis players compete in the championships which runs from Oct. 22 until Oct. 27.

Associated Press

matches in Istanbul, where she also lost to Williams in last year's semifinals. Williams is bidding for her fourth title in the event.

Errani also lost her opening group match on Tuesday to Azarenka and now looks all but certain to be eliminated.

Jankovic, who was ranked No. 1 in 2008 and is back in the top 10 for the first time since 2011, outplayed Azarenka to snap a four-match losing streak against a fellow former No. 1.

"Vika is a great champion, and I knew it was going

to be a tough match. We played against each other in Cincinnati and I lost in three sets, and I think the difference today was that I was serving much better," Jankovic said.

Williams, 32, is enjoying the finest season in her career, having already won 10 titles. She added the French Open and U.S. Open titles to bring her Grand Slam record to 17 championships and is 75-4 for the year.

Williams, making her eighth appearance in the event, is looking to become the first player to successfully

defend the title since Justine Henin in 2007. Henin was also the last to win 10 titles in a season, in 2007.

Williams has clinched the year-end No. 1 ranking for the third time in her career after 2002 and 2009.

Li trailed 3-1 in the second set against Errani, but won the next four games. She twice attempted to serve for the match, first, wasting a match point at 5-3 and then again at 6-5. Despite trailing 3-1 in the tiebreaker, Li won the next five points and eventually converted her third match point when

Errani sent a forehand into the net. That saw her take her head-to-head meetings against her Errani up to six wins without defeat.

"The first match is always tight," Li said, adding that she had felt rusty after a three-week break since her last tournament. "I still have to find the rhythm on the court."

The tournament brings together the top eight players in the world. They play two round-robin groups, with the top two finishers in each advancing to the semifinals.

Jankovic, now ranked No. 8 and seeded seventh because third-ranked Maria Sharapova pulled out of the event with a shoulder injury, proved to be the steadier player against Azarenka, the Australian Open champion.

"I was able to hold my serve and stay focused when I was serving and I waited for my chances to break, and she made some double faults at times and I took advantage of that," Jankovic said. "It's a great win for me, it gave me a lot of confidence."

The key game in the first set went to Jankovic after more than 10 minutes when she held serve for a 5-3 lead.

Azarenka saved two set points in the next game but then sent a forehand wide on Jankovic's fourth in the 10th game. □

Federer rallies to beat Istomin at Swiss Indoors

BASEL, Switzerland (AP) — Roger Federer came from behind to beat Denis Istomin 4-6, 6-3, 6-2 in the second round of the Swiss Indoors on Wednesday.

Federer conceded a set for the first time in five matches against the 48th-ranked Uzbek, and then had to rally from 0-40 down in his first service game in the decider. The seventh-ranked Swiss converted his first match point with a delightful backhand volley, but is still looking for his best tennis and a strong finish to the most difficult season of his career.

Earlier, Federer's chances of qualifying for the ATP World Tour Finals in London next month improved when Richard Gasquet was beaten 6-4, 6-2 by fellow Frenchman Michael Llodra in a first-round match.

Also Wednesday, top-seeded Juan Martin del Potro of Argentina eased past Swiss wild card Henri Laaksonen, 6-4, 6-4.

Seeded players continued to tumble with the fifth-seeded Gasquet followed by No. 6 Kei Nishikori of Japan, who lost 6-1, 6-2 against Ivan Dodig of Croatia. Eighth-seeded Grigor



Switzerland's Roger Federer returns a ball to Uzbekistan's Denis Istomin during their second round match at the Swiss Indoors tennis tournament at the St. Jakobshalle in Basel, Switzerland, Wednesday Oct. 23, 2013.

Associated Press

Dimitrov beat Radek Stepanek of the Czech Republic 6-3, 6-3 and the Bulgarian is on course to meet Federer in the quarterfinals Friday. Federer's struggles with back injuries and unheralded opponents since March have meant he still has not secured a place in the eight-man London lineup next month.

Gasquet's defeat, after Stanislas Wawrinka's first-round exit Tuesday, strengthened Federer's hold on the sixth qualifying position in the points race before he played Istomin. □

T-Mobile to offer free data service for tablets

ANICK JESDANUN

AP Technology Writer

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — T-Mobile will give U.S. owners of iPads and other tablet computers free data service for life as part of an effort to broaden its customer base beyond phones. The free service would be limited to 200 megabytes of high-speed data per month — enough to upload about 800 Instagram photos or listen to more than three hours of streaming music, the company said. T-Mobile US Inc., the No. 4 U.S. cellphone carrier, said the free service comes with no obligations, but the company expects people will want to buy plans for additional data once they grow accustomed to having it.

People typically buy tablet computers that access the Internet using Wi-Fi only. Models with 4G LTE cellular access typically cost \$100 to \$130 more, but T-Mobile marketing chief Mike Sievert said many people are reluctant to purchase cellular-enabled tablets for fear they would be stuck with month-

ly data service costs.

By guaranteeing free data service, he said, T-Mobile, which is under the control of Germany's Deutsche Telekom AG, is hoping to encourage people to buy LTE tablets.

The latest offer, announced Wednesday, comes as the company tries to shatter longstanding industry practices and brand itself as the Un-Carrier.

In March, the company dropped conventional two-year service contracts in favor of selling phones with installment plans.

In July, it introduced a program that lets people upgrade phones more frequently — up to twice a year.

This month, the company eliminated data and texting fees in more than 100 countries and capped charges for international voice calls.

There are signs the efforts are working. In the April-June quarter, T-Mobile gained long-term, good-credit customers for the first time in at least two and a half years.

T-Mobile added a net



T-Mobile CEO John Legere, right, and T-Mobile Chief Marketing Officer Mike Sievert check out a tablet before the 'Tablets Un-leashed' Twitter conference, on Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013 in Bellevue, Wash. T-Mobile announced a revolutionary approach to make tablets, just as mobile and connected as smartphones, by offering customers 200MB of free high speed data every month for the life of their device.

Associated Press

688,000 such customers in the quarter, compared with a loss of 557,000 in the same period a year earlier. The net increase includes 3,000, or less than 0.5 percent, for non-phone service such as tablets. T-Mobile officials believe there's room for further growth.

All tablet computers, including Apple's iPad, Google's Nexus 7 and Amazon's Kindle Fire, are eligible for the offer as long as they work on T-Mobile's network. Sievert said most tablets do.

The new iPads announced Tuesday are universal mod-

els, meaning they will work on various LTE networks around the world. Previously, Apple sold separate models compatible with a subset of networks. Tablet owners will need to buy a SIM card that costs about \$10. □

Samsung brings smaller version of S4 to U.S.



An employee of Samsung Electronics holds two Galaxy Note 3 smartphones while posing for photos at a train station in Seoul, South Korea, Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013. Athletes who fail to clinch gold at the 2014 Sochi Winter Olympics can take home something else: a \$900 smartphone from Samsung. Samsung Electronics Co. is giving the Galaxy Note 3 smartphone to all athletes competing at the Sochi Games in February.

Associated Press

SAN FRANCISCO (AP) — Samsung is making a small-

er version of its flagship Galaxy S4 phone available in

America next month. The screen is 4.3 inches

(10.9 centimeters) diagonally, compared with 5 inches (12.7 centimeters) for the regular S4. Nonetheless, the Mini version is still larger than the latest, 4-inch (10.16-centimeter) iPhones.

Phone companies have been making their flagship devices in multiple sizes to appeal to a broad range of consumers. Some may prefer a smaller device that fits nicely in a pocket, while others want the larger text that comes with the bigger screen.

AT&T, Sprint, Verizon and U.S. Cellular will sell the Mini. Prices are likely to be about \$100 with a two-year agreement.

Samsung says a software update will make the Mini compatible with its new Galaxy Gear computerized watch. □

Yahoo to shut down Cairo office at year's end

CAIRO (AP) — Yahoo says it will shut down its office in Cairo at the end of this year, laying off all its local employees.

The company said in a statement Wednesday it will close its offices in Cairo as part of its "global efforts to streamline operations ... by bringing more (offices) together in fewer locations."

Yahoo said its employees in the Cairo office will be offered separation packages that "exceed local law requirements." The company declined to say how many people are currently employed by Yahoo in Cairo.

Yahoo said it will serve its Middle East and Africa markets from its offices in Dubai and Amman, Jordan. □

US stocks slide on Caterpillar earnings

STEVE ROTHWELL
AP Markets Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — A four-day streak of record closes ended for the Standard & Poor's 500 index Wednesday after Caterpillar reported weak earnings and falling oil prices hurt energy stocks.

Caterpillar, which makes mining and construction equipment, is considered an important barometer of the global economy. The plunge in Caterpillar's third-quarter profit discouraged investors and stalled a two-week surge in the stock market. Energy stocks dropped as the price of oil fell to its lowest in almost four months.

The S&P 500 had surged 6 percent over the previous two weeks. The index climbed as lawmakers inched toward a deal to end a 16-day partial government shutdown and avert a potential U.S. default. Investors also became more convinced that the Federal Reserve will refrain from easing back on its economic stimulus until possibly next year.

"We need to let a little bit of air out of the balloon here," said Alec Young, a global equity strategist at S&P Capital IQ. "We've seen a huge rally, so there's a bit of short-term-exhaustion."

The S&P 500 dropped 8.29 points, or 0.5 percent, to 1,746.38, ending its longest streak of record closes since mid-May.

Energy stocks fell the most of the 10 industry sectors in the S&P 500. Oil slipped

\$1.42, or 1.4 percent, to \$97.80 a barrel, on higher U.S. supplies of crude and weak demand for fuel.

Along with weaker earnings, Caterpillar issued a lower profit forecast. Its stock dropped \$5.41, or 6.1 percent, to \$83.76.

Broadcom was another company that disappointed Wall Street with its third-quarter earnings. The communications chip maker fell 78 cents or 2.9 percent, to

\$129.02. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 54.33 points, or 0.4 percent, to 15,413.33. The Nasdaq composite dropped 22.49 points, or 0.6 percent, to 3,907.07.

While some earnings disappointed investors on

cording to data from S&P Capital IQ.

"Obviously we've had one casualty today with Caterpillar but, so far, most companies have beaten market expectations," said Peter Cardillo, chief market economist at Rockwell Global Capital.

S&P 500 companies are expected to report earnings growth of 3.5 percent for the July-to-September quarter over the same pe-



Todd Ingrilli, center, works with fellow traders on the floor of the New York Stock Exchange. A four-day streak of record closes ended for the Standard & Poor's 500 index Wednesday after Caterpillar reported weak earnings and falling oil prices hurt energy stocks.

(AP Photo/Richard Drew)

\$26.36, reported adjusted results that exceeded Wall Street expectations, but the company's earnings forecast was weak.

It wasn't all bad news from corporate America.

Boeing raised its profit es-

timated for the full year because deliveries of commercial planes continue to accelerate. The plane maker's stock climbed \$6.54, or 5.3 percent, to \$129.02. The Dow Jones industrial average fell 54.33 points, or 0.4 percent, to 15,413.33. The Nasdaq composite dropped 22.49 points, or 0.6 percent, to 3,907.07.

Wednesday, most are reporting profits that are better than expected. About sixty percent of the companies in the S&P 500 that have reported third-quarter earnings have beaten analysts' forecasts, ac-

riod a year earlier. Revenue is expected to rise by 3.9 percent. In government bond trading, the yield on the 10-year Treasury note fell to 2.50 percent from 2.51 percent late Tuesday. □

Oil price tumbles below \$97 on ample supplies

The Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The price of oil fell another 1.5 percent Wednesday on higher U.S. supplies of crude and weak demand for fuel.

Benchmark U.S. crude for December delivery fell \$1.44 to \$96.86 a barrel in New York. The price has fallen 5 percent over the last week to its lowest level since late June.

Brent crude, which is used to price international oil used at many U.S. refineries,

was down \$2.17 to \$107.80 per barrel in London.

The U.S. Energy Department said in a report issued Wednesday that oil inventories rose by 5.2 million barrels over the past week. That followed the government's report released Monday that showed a 4 million barrel increase in crude supplies for the week ended Oct. 11.

Gasoline inventories decreased by 1.8 million barrels, but supplies of both oil

and gasoline are at the upper range of their average over the past five years.

Demand for fuels fell 1.5 percent compared to the same period last year.

Oil analyst Jim Ritterbusch said in a report Wednesday that the market looked "oversupplied" because of rising U.S. production.

Another factor in oil's recent decline, analysts say, is reduced risk of supply disruptions out of the Middle East — and a possible re-

turn of more Iranian crude to the global market — as talks between Iran and the West over Iran's nuclear program have re-started. In other energy futures trading on the New York Mercantile Exchange:

— Wholesale gasoline fell 6.5 cents to close at \$2.552 a gallon.

— Natural gas rose 3.8 cents to close at \$3.619 per 1,000 cubic feet.

— Heating oil fell 7.4 cents to close at \$2.923 a gallon.

Ford, Toyota dispute who has top-selling car

TOM KRISHER
AP Auto Writer

DETROIT (AP) — A name makes all the difference in the fight between Ford and Toyota over who has the top-selling car in the world.

Ford on Wednesday claimed that crown for its Focus compact during the first half of the year, based on registration data gathered by the R.L. Polk & Co. research firm.

The Dearborn, Michigan-based company sold 589,709 Focuses from January through June across the globe, a 20 percent increase over the first half of last year, said Erich Merkle, Ford's top sales analyst.

The Focus, according to Ford, beat the perennial No. 2 Toyota Corolla, although Merkle said he could not release Polk's numbers for the Corolla. A Polk spokeswoman confirmed that the number provided by Ford was accurate, but declined further comment.

If the Focus beats Corolla for all of 2013, it would be the second year in a row that Ford lays claim to the top honors.

But Toyota disputes Ford's leadership. The Japanese automaker has said it sold a Corolla hatchback under the Matrix name, and it sells cars that are nearly identical to the Corolla under different names in countries outside the U.S. Ford doesn't tally Toyota's other nameplates in its count. Toyota has contended that if all the other nameplates are added in, the Corolla is the winner.

A Toyota spokeswoman said Wednesday that the company disagrees with Ford and is drawing up a response to Ford's claims.

Merkle said the Focus' gains are largely due to China, where sales more than doubled to 202,380 in the first half of the year. A new version of the Focus has been on the market only about a year in China, and it's considered a new product there. □

Heineken issues profit warning on emerging markets

TOBY STERLING
AP Business Writer

AMSTERDAM (AP) — Dutch brewer Heineken NV issued a profit warning Wednesday, saying business was worse than expected in developing markets and the economic recovery in industrial nations was weak. The world's third-largest brewer now expects full year "underlying earnings," which strip out the effects of acquisitions,

to be lower than they were in 2012, whereas it had previously said they would be "broadly in line." The company also reported a 15 percent fall in actual earnings for the third quarter, with net profit dropping to 483 million euros (\$665 million) from 568 million in the same period a year ago, in part because of the stronger euro. Heineken's share price fell by 5.5 percent to 49.93 euros in Amsterdam.

CEO Jean-Francois van Boxmeer said the company will respond by expanding its cost-cutting programs. "We didn't expect such negative development in central and eastern Europe," he said on a conference call with analysts, noting that the Russian market may shrink by as much as 10 percent. "Secondly, we were expecting better in key developing markets like

Mexico and Nigeria," Van Boxmeer said. He also put Brazil in that category, saying Heineken had expected beer markets to reflect economic growth that has so far failed to materialize. The company's third quarter trading update also showed revenues, including acquisitions, rose 4 percent to 5.18 billion euros during the period. However, they grew just 0.2 percent without the impact of

acquisitions, as price hikes of 3.4 percent outweighed a 3.2 percent fall in volumes across the company. "Volumes and sales in the third quarter were lower than expected as Heineken continues to face challenging market conditions in emerging markets," said SNS Securities analyst Richard Withagen in a note. Withagen repeated a "Reduce" rating on the shares. □

Boeing soars on strong demand for new planes

JOSHUA FREED
AP Business Writer

Boeing is riding a wave of demand for new fuel-efficient planes from airlines around the globe. Now the

commercial planes. It now says it will boost output of the new 787 by 40 percent by the end of the decade. On Wednesday, Boeing reported a better-than-ex-

pected third-quarter profit and raised its full-year outlook. Its shares hit an all-time high. Along with automakers, aerospace companies

like Boeing have been a source of manufacturing strength, offsetting the recent struggles of other big manufacturers like Caterpillar. On Wednesday, Cat-

pillar said a steep drop-off in its mining business reduced revenue by \$11 billion compared to last year. The maker of mining and construction equip-

ment reduced its profit guidance for the second time in three months. Automakers have been benefiting from low interest rates and pent-up demand from car buyers who held onto cars for longer than usual during the Great Recession. Boeing and European rival Airbus are benefiting from a big expansion of low-cost airlines in Asia and Latin America, and faster replacements of current planes because new planes are fuel efficient enough to justify their cost. Also, buying an airplane almost always involves a loan, so like carmakers, aerospace companies have also been benefiting from lower interest rates. Boeing is now making its long-haul 777 at a rate of more than eight per month, up from five in 2010. Airbus has boosted output of its competing A330 to 10 per month.

On Wednesday, Boeing

said it will boost production of the 787 from 10 per month by the end of this year to 12 per month in 2016, and it's aiming to get to 14 per month by the end of this decade.

The long-range, fuel-efficient 787 has turned out to be very popular with airlines and is benefiting from today's economics. Jet fuel prices now are six times higher than in 1995, the last time Boeing delivered an all-new airplane model.

The speeding up of 787 production is especially noteworthy because at one point it wasn't clear whether Boeing would even meet its goal of delivering 60 of the planes in 2013. Battery had to cease deliveries when the planes were grounded for battery problems. Deliveries resumed in May and Boeing expects to meet its goal. Overall, Boeing expects to deliver 635 to 645 passenger airplanes this year. □



The Boeing Company logo is seen on the property in El Segundo, Calif. Boeing announced soaring third-quarter earnings late in the afternoon on Wednesday Oct. 23, 2013.

(AP Photo/Reed Saxon)

trick is to build them fast enough.

With a backlog of orders worth \$344 billion, Boeing has been speeding up production of its big com-

mercial planes. It now says it will boost output of the new 787 by 40 percent by the end of the decade.

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On Wednesday, Boeing

US Airways net income dips on higher taxes

DAVID KOENIG
AP Airlines Writer

DALLAS (AP) — Higher taxes lowered US Airways' third-quarter profit, but the airline still beat Wall Street expectations on a combination of more traffic and higher average fares.

US Airways, the nation's fifth-biggest airline, pushed revenue higher by filling a larger percentage of seats. Including US Airways Express regional flights, passengers traveled nearly 5 percent more miles

and they paid 4.4 percent more for every mile that they flew.

US Airways is attempting to merge with AMR Corp., the parent of American Airlines, but the U.S. government has sued the companies to block the deal.

On Wednesday, US Airways Group Inc. said net income was \$216 million, or \$1.04 per share, for the quarter ended Sept. 30. That's down 12 percent from \$245 million, or \$1.24 per share, a year earlier.

The difference: In this year's quarter, US Airways owed \$120 million in income taxes compared with just \$1 million last year. The company used up its ability to reduce taxes by carrying over losses from previous years. Excluding costs of the proposed merger with American, US Airways said it would have earned \$1.16 per share, four cents better than analysts expected. Revenue rose 9 percent to \$3.86 billion, a bit higher than analysts' forecast of

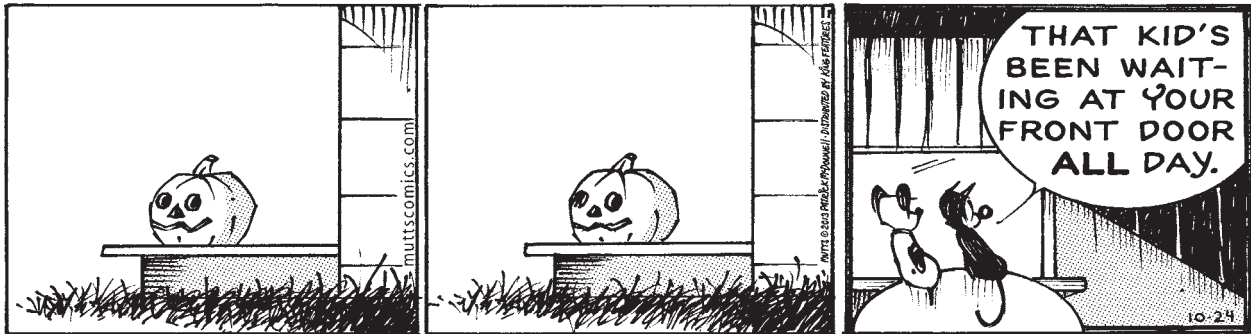
\$3.84 billion, according to a survey by FactSet.

Costs rose 5 percent as the company expanded its passenger-carrying capacity. Fuel was the biggest expense, but it rose just 2 percent while labor costs jumped nearly 12 percent.

In premarket trading, US Airways shares fell 5 cents to \$21.90. They ended Tuesday up 63 percent for the year, pushed higher by expectations that the company would complete

the merger with American. The deal would create the world's biggest airline, which would keep the American Airlines name but be run by US Airways CEO Doug Parker and many of his top executives. In August, the U.S. Justice Department filed an antitrust lawsuit to block the merger, saying that it would limit competition and drive up prices. A trial is scheduled to begin Nov. 25 in federal court in Washington. □

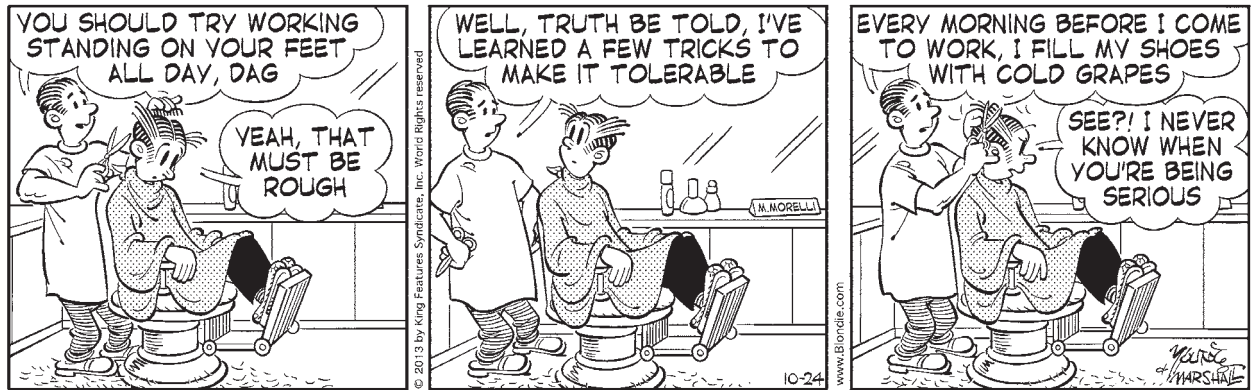
Mutts



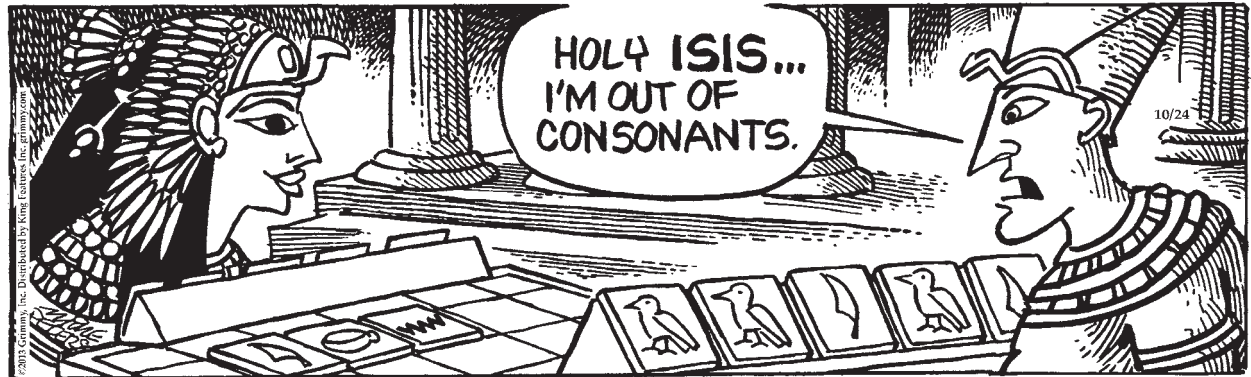
6 Chix



Blondie



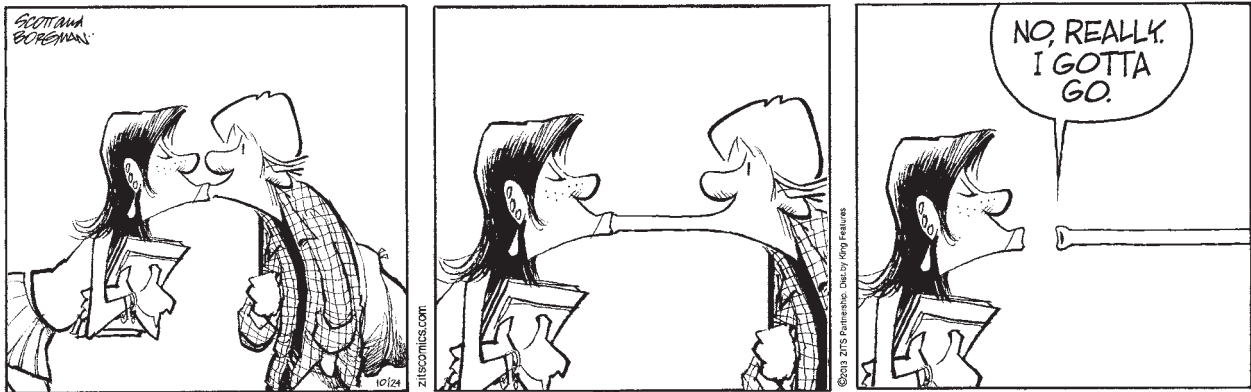
Mother Goose & Grimm



Baby Blues



Zits



Conceptis Sudoku

3						1		2
		5	9				3	
	7		6					9
	3	7			8			
			1			6	4	
9					4		5	
	8				6	2		
6		1						7

Difficulty Level ★★★

10/24

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Sunday.

Yesterday's puzzle answer

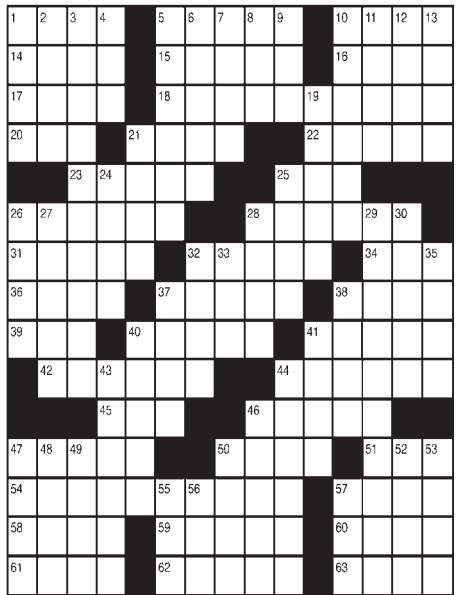
4	7	5	9	1	8	6	2	3
1	2	9	3	6	5	7	4	8
8	3	6	7	4	2	1	9	5
6	4	7	2	8	9	5	3	1
3	9	8	6	5	1	2	7	4
5	1	2	4	7	3	8	6	9
9	8	3	5	2	7	4	1	6
7	5	4	1	3	6	9	8	2
2	6	1	8	9	4	3	5	7

ACROSS

- 1 ___ on; discuss
ad nauseam
5 Use Brillo
10 Irritates
14 Pitcher
15 Like thin pizza crust
16 Toledo's state
17 Military force
18 People to be imitated
20 Bread for a Reuben
21 Mattel's beau for Barbie
22 Spinnet or grand
23 Currency
25 TV room, often
26 Monkey with a doglike muzzle
28 Tendons
31 Skillful
32 Group taught by a teacher
34 Actor Holbrook
36 Saloons
37 Tree branch
38 Fuzzy fruit
39 Grow old
40 Come together
41 Shot a pistol
42 Canada's Prince ___ Island
44 W.C. or Totie
45 Boar
46 Meat sauce
47 Up and about
50 Horse's gait
51 Cot, for one
54 New member's induction rite
57 Urgent
58 Water barrier
59 Wanderer
60 Egg on
61 Twirl
62 Adolescents
63 Aroma

DOWN

- 1 Listen
2 Twisted; askew
3 Recalled
4 Use a crowbar
5 Window cover
6 Close friend



Created by Jacqueline E. Mathews

10/24/13

Wednesday's Puzzle Solved

SEN	SCRAM	KISS
EXIT	THOSE	IOWA
WANE	RISKS	STAG
MERCILESS	MAME	
MADE	HIE	
SPRINT	PHANTOMS	
QUITS	CAULK	MAN
URGE	HOTEL	JANE
AGO	RENTS	TAHOE
TERIYAKI	LAMARR	
RED	SARA	
ALSO	ASSISTING	
COIN	CHANT	CALF
TOTE	HINGE	AREA
SPED	ENDED	YEN

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10/24/13

- 38 Ukraine's capital
40 Native New Zealander
41 Italian auto
43 Soak in bleach
44 Fern leaves
46 Moan in pain
47 Lends a hand
- 48 Make a tiny cut
49 Polynesian carved image
50 Magazine title
52 Therefore
53 Forest animal
55 Colony insect
56 Foot digit
57 Singing couple

Monsanto calls glyphosate 'safe' after AP report

MICHAEL WARREN

Associated Press

BUENOS AIRES, Argentina (AP) — Monsanto Co. is calling for more controls on agrochemicals, including its Roundup line of glyphosate-based weed-killers, in response to an Associated Press report about concerns that illegal pesticide applications are harming human health in Argentina. "If pesticides are being misused in Argentina, then it is in everyone's best interests - the public, the govern-

communities, and they're calling for broader, longer-term studies to rule out agrochemical exposure as a cause of these and other illnesses. Asked for Monsanto's position on this, company spokesman Thomas Hellscher told the AP in an email Tuesday that "the absence of reliable data makes it very difficult to establish trends in disease incidence and even more difficult to establish causal relationships. To our knowl-

cal burden, a mix of many individual ingredients. In 1996, Monsanto paid a \$50,000 fine and agreed to "cease and desist" promoting glyphosate as "safe" after New York's attorney general sued it for false advertising. Monsanto acknowledged then that EPA approval "is not an assurance or finding of safety" because U.S. regulations are based on a cost-benefit analysis, which balances the potential of "any unreasonable risk to



A tractor known as a "mosquito" dusts a field near Gualeguaychu, Entre Rios province, Argentina. Most provinces forbid spraying next to homes and schools, ranging in distance from 50 meters to as much as several kilometers from populated areas. But The Associated Press found many cases of soybeans planted only a few feet from homes and schools, and of chemicals mixed and loaded onto tractors inside residential neighborhoods.

(AP Photo/Natasha Pisarenko)

ment, farmers, industry, and Monsanto - that the misuse be stopped," the St. Louis, Missouri-based company said after the AP report was published Monday. The company criticized the AP report as lacking in specifics about health impacts, though the story cited hospital birth records, court records, peer-reviewed studies, continuing epidemiological surveys, pesticide industry and government data, and a comprehensive audit of agrochemical use in 2008-11 prepared by Argentina's bipartisan Auditor General's Office. Argentine doctors interviewed by the AP said their caseloads — not laboratory experiments — show an apparent correlation between the arrival of intensive industrial agriculture and rising rates of cancer and birth defects in rural

edge there are no established causal relationships." Earlier, Monsanto criticized the AP report as "overbroad in indicting all 'pesticides' when we know that glyphosate is safe." "The U.S. EPA and other agencies not only say there is no evidence of carcinogenicity but go further to give it the highest rating, "E," which means there is affirmative evidence that glyphosate does not cause cancer in humans." This claim of safety is part of the problem, Monsanto's critics say. While glyphosate is less toxic in terms of acute exposure than many other herbicides, insecticides and fungicides, it is routinely blended with other chemicals when applied to crops. The spray that drifts from fields and seeps into groundwater adds to an overall chemi-

man or the environment" against the "the economic, social, and environmental costs and benefits of the use of any pesticide." Argentine federal law follows a different standard. It says that when "faced with the possibility of serious and irreversible harm," the users of a chemical must make sure they protect human health and the environment, even when there's "a lack of information or scientific certainty," and "no matter the costs and consequences." Asked which standard Monsanto should follow in Argentina, the company spokesman said it follows all applicable regulations all over the world. "It is not for Monsanto to decide or give opinion about the legal principles that rule the regulations of the country. □

Classifieds

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CRUISESHIP

Oct. 24

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Avianca	588-0059
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Foundation

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Bloodbank Aruba
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Former 'Rat Island' in Alaska has whole new look

BECKY BOHRER

Associated Press

JUNEAU, Alaska (AP) --

Conservationists and federal wildlife officials are reporting success, five years after undertaking an effort to eradicate rats from a remote Alaska island.

Officials with Island Conservation, The Nature Conservancy and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said Wednesday that the island - once known as Rat Island because of its infestation of invasive Norway rats - is now teeming with birds, whose songs and noises have replaced the silence that had been reported there when the rats ran rampant. They said for the first time, breeding tufted puffins have been documented on the island, which is part of the Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge and near the far end of the Aleutian Island chain that stretches out into the Bering Sea. They also reported an increase in ground-nesting and shorebird numbers compared to prior surveys and documented song sparrows, which were not recorded during prior visits, said biologist Stacey Buckelew, who worked as a contractor for Island Con-



In this June 2013 photo provided by Island Conservation, a Black Oystercatcher is shown with a nest and chick on Hawadax Island, Alaska.

Associated Press

servation earlier this year when the latest survey was conducted.

The makeover of the island includes a name change: Rat Island officially became Hawadax Island, a nod to the original Aleut name, in 2012.

Randy Hagenstein, Alaska state director for The Nature Conservancy, called the transformation "one of the successes for conserving island ecosystems around the world."

"We set the island back on its course to being a normal, productive and noisy island full of bird life," he said. Buckelew said islands

infested by rats are "void of wildlife, more or less," with the rats basically eating themselves out of house and home. What one finds instead are rat scat-covered rocks, remains of snails and other creatures, scavenged bird bones and "this eerie silence," said Buckelew, who had done prior work on islands in Mexico affected by rats and other invasive species. The Aleutians are tree-free, she said, with the highest vegetation being coastal grass. Rats were able to get into burrows used by birds for nesting and eat eggs and chicks, she said.

The rats were eliminated through the use of poisonous bait pellets. Now that the rats are gone, "what's beginning to happen is, you're getting a recovery of this rich and vibrant community that you see on other islands in the Aleutians," she said, declaring the island "hardly recognizable." "The features are the same, but you hear birds that weren't there before the eradication," she said. Rats are believed to have gotten their start on the island in the 1780s with a shipwreck. Buckelew estimated there were 10,000 or more on the roughly 6,800-acre island when eradication efforts began in 2008. Their reproduction rate was prodigious with a female capable of producing a litter of up to 12 young every three to six weeks, she said. Had a single pregnant female been left behind, that would have been enough to repopulate the island again, she said. While the island is uninhabited by humans and visited by few, part of the value it provides to people is the knowledge that there are places like this set aside for wildlife, refuge manager Steve Delehanty said. □



In this August 9, 2013 photo provided by Island Conservation, a Tufted Puffin flies over Hawadax Island, Alaska. Five years after an effort to eradicate rats from the remote Alaskan island, conservationists and federal wildlife officials are reporting success.

Associated Press

South Pole ozone hole slightly smaller this year

SETH BORENSTEIN

AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — Scientists say warm upper air this September and October helped shrink the man-made ozone hole near the South Pole slightly.

The hole is an area in the atmosphere with low ozone concentrations. It is normally at its biggest this time of year. The U.S. space agency says on average it covered 8.1 million square miles (20.9 million sq. kilometers) this season. That's 6 percent smaller than the average since 1990.

High-altitude ozone shields Earth from ultraviolet radiation. NASA chief atmospheric scientist Paul A. Newman says the main reason

for this year's result is local weather. The upper air has been warmer than normal, which led to fewer polar stratospheric clouds. These clouds are where ozone is destroyed by chlorine and bromine, which come from man-made products.

James Butler, director of the global monitoring division at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Earth System Research Lab, said Wednesday that the new figures are "sort of encouraging news."

"It's not getting worse," Butler said. "That's a good sign."

Butler said it stopped getting worse around the late 1990s. But he added. □



A new idea for space tourism: Balloon over rocket

SETH BORENSTEIN

AP Science Writer

WASHINGTON (AP) — The latest space tourism venture depends more on hot air than rocket science. World View Enterprises announced plans Tuesday to send people up in a cap-

sule, lifted 19 miles (30 kilometers) by a high-altitude balloon. Jane Poynter, CEO of the Tucson, Arizona-based company, said the price for the four-hour ride would be \$75,000. While it's not quite space — that starts at 62 miles

This artist's rendering provided by World View Enterprises on Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2013 shows their design for a capsule lifted by a high-altitude balloon up 19 miles into the air for tourists. Company CEO Jane Poynter said people would pay \$75,000 to spend a couple hours looking down at the curve of the Earth.

Associated Press

(100 kilometers) — the plan requires approval from the Federal Aviation Administration, which oversees commercial space.

Poynter said the plan uses existing technology and the first launch could be as early as the end of 2016.

"There are balloons this size that have already flown up many, many times for decades," Poynter said. "From a technical point of view this is incredibly doable, low risk." □

Underwood will star on live TV in 'Sound of Music'

JOHN CARUCCI
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — The end of the year looks busy for Carrie Underwood, and she couldn't be happier. The six-time Grammy-winning singer will host the Country Music Association Awards for the sixth time. You can see her singing the opening on NBC's "Sunday Night Football." And for one night in December, she'll star in a live television version of "The Sound of Music."

The 30-year-old star told the Associated Press on the red carpet Tuesday night at the T.J. Martell Foundation gala, where she was one of the night's honorees, that she nervous doing something she's never done before. But then she realized, "None of us have. This is a live show on TV. So this is definitely a challenge for all of us."

She said the live singing and acting was like "going to a Broadway show, but you're in your living room." "The Sound of Music" airs Dec. 5 on NBC with Underwood playing Maria alongside "True Blood" vampire Stephen Moyer. He portrays Captain von Trapp. Broadway veterans — and Tony winners — Audra McDonald, Laura Benanti and Christian Borle round out the cast as Mother Abbess, Elsa and Max.

While the Nashville, Tennessee-based Underwood is no stranger to performing before millions of people on live television — she won the fourth season of "American Idol" — she felt she needed more prepa-



From left, Tony Martell, Carrie Underwood and John Sykes attend the T.J. Martell Foundation 38th Honors Gala, on Tuesday, Oct. 22, 2013, in New York.

Associated Press

ration, so she showed up in New York three weeks early.

"I wanted to be here and have all my lines memorized and everything and be ready for it. It's been really wonderful," Underwood said. "Audra and Laura are incredible. Stephen's great. It's nice to be surrounded by that much talent."

Before doing that show, the multiplatinum-selling artist returns to her hosting duties on the CMAs. She's nominated for three awards, including album of the year and song of the year. While she and co-host Brad Paisley have it down to a science, she doesn't see the experience as old hat.

"You never know what's

going to happen with us hosting," Underwood joked.

She added: "I think being nominated — especially when hosting the CMAs — you just never know."

The CMAs take place Nov. 6 in Nashville.

Underwood also spoke about recording the opening number this season for "Sunday Night Football." She claims doing it was a no-brainer.

"It's a lot of fun. I grew up watching football. I'm from Oklahoma, it's what we do," she said with a big smile.

The conversation then turned to hockey and her husband Mike Fisher's team, the Nashville Predators.

George Clooney's 'Monuments Men' pushed to 2014

NEW YORK (AP) — George Clooney's World War II drama "The Monuments Men" is being pushed to 2014 and out of the autumn awards season.

A spokesman for Sony Pictures said Wednesday the movie will now be released in the first quarter of next year, instead of its planned

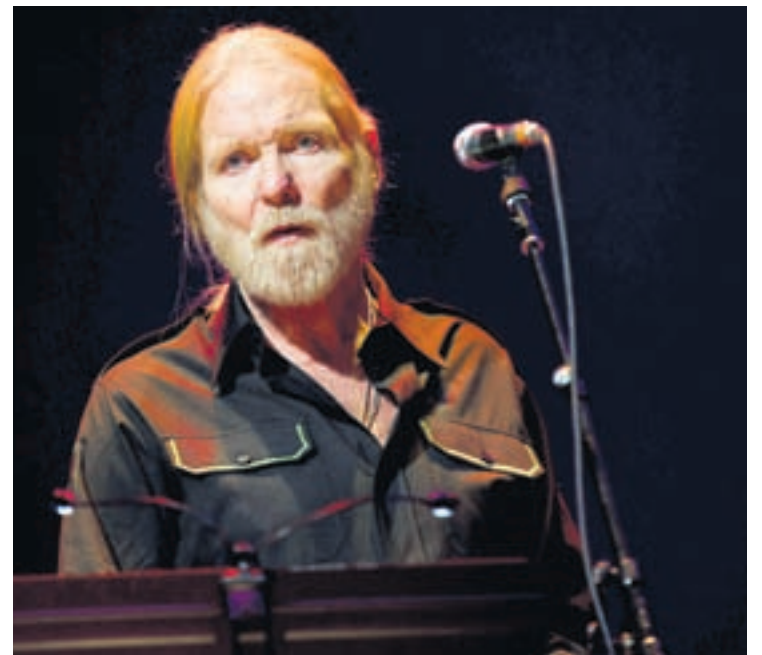
release date of Dec. 18. "Monuments Men," which Clooney directed, co-wrote and stars in, had been expected to be a top Oscar contender.

The film could still compete for awards next year, but the early-in-the-year positioning suggests Sony doesn't expect it to. Sony

said the film is being delayed so Clooney can finish the film's extensive visual effects.

The film is about a WWII platoon whose mission is to rescue artworks from the Nazis.

The Los Angeles Times first reported the release date change. □



In this April 13, 2013 file photo, Gregg Allman performs at Eric Clapton's Crossroads Guitar Festival 2013 at Madison Square Garden, in New York.

Associated Press

Stars to hold tribute concert for Gregg Allman

ATLANTA (AP) — The Allman Brothers, Sam Moore, Taj Mahal, Warren Haynes, Eric Church and several others have signed on to pay tribute in concert to Gregg Allman early next year.

"All My Friends: Celebrating the Songs & Voice of Gregg Allman" will be held Jan. 10 at Atlanta's Fox Theatre. The concert will be filmed and released later. Others on the eclectic list

of performers include Natalie Cole, Jackson Browne, John Hiatt, Pat Monahan of Train, Martina McBride, Trace Adkins and John Hiatt. Special guests and more performers will be announced soon. Tickets go on sale Nov. 1 at the Fox Theatre box office.

Don Was will lead an all-star band lined up to help celebrate Allman, a member of the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame. □

Tom Hardy to play Elton John in biopic

NEW YORK (AP) — Tom Hardy will play Elton John in a biopic titled "Rocketman." Focus Features announced Hardy's casting as the iconic piano man on Wednesday. The film is planned to begin shooting late next year.

The 36-year-old British actor is well respected for his wide-ranging talent, but his brawny, tattooed frame makes him an unconventional choice. Hardy is most famous for playing the terrorist Bane in "The Dark Knight Rises." He has showcased a muscled masculinity in films like "Warrior," "Lawless" and "Bronson."

"Rocketman" is being



In this Oct. 15, 2013 file photo, Elton John arrives at the Elton John AIDS Foundation's 12th Annual "An Enduring Vision" benefit gala at Cipriani Wall Street in New York.

Associated Press

made with the cooperation of the 66-year-old John, who's an executive producer on the film. □

'Blue' arrives in U.S. with praise, whiff of scandal

JOCELYN NOVECK

AP National Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — "Blue is the Warmest Color" arrives in the United States from France this week — and it's bringing along some baggage.

On the plus side, the intense and soulful lesbian romance carries a Palme D'Or from Cannes, awarded not only to director Abdellatif Kechiche but, in a rare gesture, to his lead actresses, who received effusive praise from jury head Steven Spielberg. It's also done boffo box office in France.

On the more complicated side, it carries a whiff of scandal — in the form of bitter post-Cannes remarks from the stars about their working conditions — most notably actress Lea Seydoux's complaint in an interview that Kechiche made her feel "like a prostitute" during filming. Kechiche fired back that, well, maybe the movie just shouldn't be released at all. Which brings us to ... oh yes! The sex scenes.

"Blue" features sex scenes that are hugely explicit for a feature film, including one that lasts close to 10 minutes. They've earned the film an NC-17 rating



This photo released by courtesy of Sundance Selects shows Adele Exarchopoulos, left, as Adele, and Lea Seydoux, as Emma, in the film, "Blue Is the Warmest Color," directed by Abdellatif Kechiche. Associated Press

and even a ban at one movie theater in Boise, Idaho (its liquor license is tied to a law banning certain sexual images.)

There's also been discussion of whether the lesbian sex, however explicit, was as authentic as it could have been.

All this sex talk threatens, in the view of the film's breakout star, Adele Exarchopoulos, to overpower reaction to the rest of the movie — which, at three hours long, has been praised by many as a singular achievement in its raw, visceral depiction

of both the hypnotic power and horrible pain of a first love. "You know, these scenes are just like the other ones, and we ask people to respect that," says Exarchopoulos, 19, speaking in a recent interview at a Manhattan hotel, and employing a rather charming mix of confident and halting English. "I understand totally if you don't like this scene or you are uncomfortable with it, because I know ... I myself am too! "Because we aren't used to that — 10 minutes in a room with just two women

loving each other. Usually in a movie you have two minutes, beautiful and sexy positions with nice lighting and nice music. Our scenes are more like life. But I do think people reduce the movie too much to these scenes." As for popular reaction in the United States, Exarchopoulos is, as they say, cautiously optimistic.

"People here are maybe more Puritan," she says. "But we didn't know before Cannes, either. When we saw Spielberg, we thought, this genius who made 'E.T.,' he will never love this mov-

ie, maybe it's too raw. But then he said it was like the best love story he'd ever seen!"

Both Exarchopoulos and Seydoux, almost a decade her senior at 28, have been praised for their courage and their skill. But Exarchopoulos has been the revelation: She's in virtually every frame of the film, which spans several years in the life of a young woman — not coincidentally, named Adele — in northern France. One day, she spies a blue-haired woman, Emma, on the street (hence the 'Blue' in the title) and is overpowered by the attraction she feels, something she's never felt for a man, or anyone. It's the story of an awakening: romantic, sexual, intellectual, even spiritual. But the romance is tested by other forces: Class and culture. Emma is an artist, from a liberal, bohemian family.

Adele comes from a more conservative background, and wants to be a teacher, rather than be the writer Emma wants her to be. The two ultimately clash, painfully and violently.

To hear Exarchopoulos talk, the devastating breakup scene was even harder than the sex scenes. □

In Marvel's 'Iron Man,' family's secrets unravel

MATT MOORE

Associated Press

Tony Stark's always been a man of many talents for whom surprise is a rare thing.

But the avenging philanthropic billionaire — better known for the high-tech armor he wears as Iron Man — is about to find himself felled by not one, but two, family secrets that have him questioning his place in the world and why the reality of his origin was kept from him.

The big reveal comes in the pages of "Iron Man" No. 17, out Wednesday in comic shops, written by Kieron Gillen, illustrated by Carlo Pagulayan and Scott Hanna, lettered by Joe Caramagna and edited by

Mark Paniccia.

In it Gillen brings the long-simmering story to its conclusion with Stark finding out that not only is he — again, spoilers — adopted, but that his parents, Howard and Maria, had a son — imbued with alien technology proffered by the rogue android 451 — who has been hidden away from the world, laden with unknown abilities and, perhaps, powers.

Gillen calls it a new challenge for Stark, one that is closer to home and more down to earth than his normal conflicts, which have included villainous masterminds, god-like alien intelligences and mechanical behemoths, among others. "What could I do to chal-



This image provided by Marvel shows the cover of "Iron Man" No. 17, out Wednesday, Oct. 23, 2013 in comic shops. Associated Press

lenge the characters' core conception of their self," Gillen said in an interview

of the revelations which find Tony both accepting of them yet still experiencing a swirl of emotion as the facts of his life come out in full view and meeting his brother, Arno, who has been in a hospital his entire life, wanting for nothing, but an enigma regardless.

"When you discover something about yourself, you reprocess. How does it churn in the gut? How do you re-examine your life?" said Gillen. "It's a completely different prism in how you study yourself."

The notion of Tony's being adopted changes nothing about him as a Stark, said Marvel Editor-In-Chief Axel Alonso.

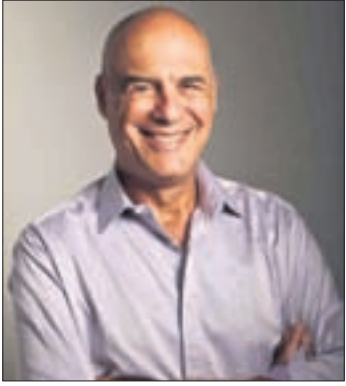
"When Kieron pitched the story, the bottom line

question for us was 'Does this open up the doorway to stories that are worth telling?'" he said. "And it does. Who are Tony's parents? Will he want to know them? How will he feel about Howard? How will this affect the dynamic between father and son?"

That, said Alonso, will enrich Tony and, by extension, Iron Man, whose first appearance was 50 years ago in "Tales of Suspense" No. 39.

"When you introduce a twist this big to an iconic character's life, you have to do due diligence and think through all the angles," he said. "We will definitely have something to say about adoptions and what it means." □

How To Feed The World



MARK BITTMAN

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Fifty years ago this month President John F. Kennedy spoke of ending world hunger, yet the situation remains dire. Something approaching a billion people are hungry, a number that's been fairly stable for more than 50 years, although it has declined as a percentage of the total population.

"Feeding the world" might as well be a marketing slogan for Big Ag, a euphemism for "Let's ramp up sales," as if producing more cars would guarantee that everyone had one. But if it worked that way, surely the rate of hunger in the United States would not be the highest of any developed nation, a rate closer to that of Indonesia than of Britain.

The world has long produced enough calories, around 2,700 per day per human, more than enough to meet the United Nations projection of a population of 9 billion in 2050, up from the current 7 billion. There are hungry people not because food is lacking, but because not all of those calories go to feed humans (a third go to feed animals, nearly 5 percent are used to produce biofuels, and as much as a third is wasted, all along the food chain).

The current system is neither environmentally nor economically sustainable, dependent as it is on fossil fuels and routinely resulting in environmental damage. It's geared to letting the half of the planet with money eat well while everyone else scrambles to eat as cheaply as possible. Paradoxically, as increasing numbers of people can afford to eat well, food for the poor will become scarcer, because demand for animal products will surge, and they require more resources like grain to produce. A global population growth of less than 30 percent is projected to double the demand for animal products. But there is not the land, water or fertilizer - let alone the health care funding - for the world to consume Western levels of meat. If we want to ensure that poor people eat and also do a better job than "modern" farming does at preserving the earth's health and productivity, we must stop assuming that the industrial model of food production and its accompanying disease-producing diet is both inevitable and desirable. I have dozens of friends and colleagues who say things like, "I hate industrial ag, but how will we feed the poor?"

Let's at last recognize that there are two food systems, one industrial and one of small landhold-

ers, or peasants if you prefer. The peasant system is not only here for good, it's arguably more efficient than the industrial model. According to the ETC Group, a research and advocacy organization based in Ottawa, Ontario, the industrial food chain uses 70 percent of agricultural resources to provide 30 percent of the world's food, whereas what ETC calls "the peasant food web" produces the remaining 70 percent using only 30 percent of the resources.

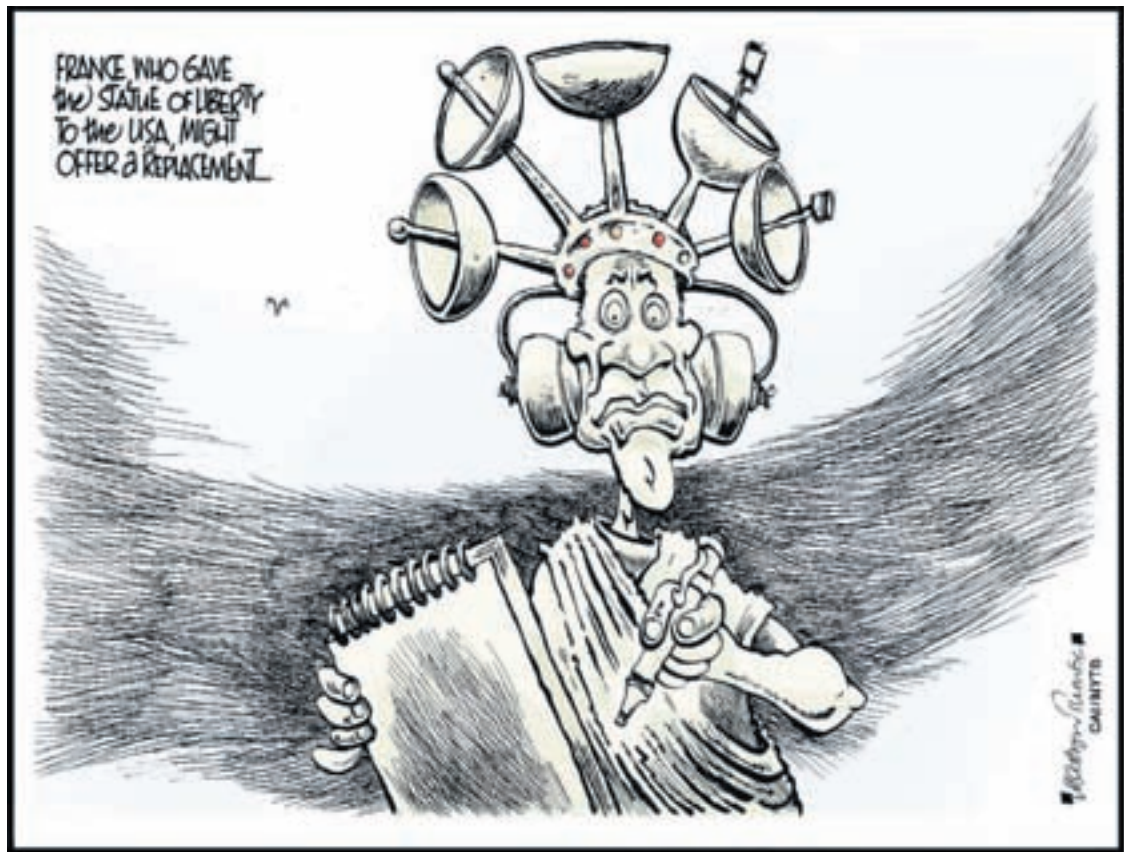
Obviously not all poor people feed themselves well, because they lack the essentials: land, water, energy and nutrients. Often that's a result of cruel dictatorship (North Korea) or war, displacement and strife (the Horn of Africa, Haiti and many other places), or drought or other calamities. But it can also be an intentional and direct result of land and food speculation and land and water grabs, which make it impossible for peasants to remain in their home villages. (Governments of many developing countries may also act as agents for industrial agriculture, seeing peasant farming as "inefficient.")

The result is forced flight to cities, where peasants become poorly paid laborers, enter the cash market for (increasingly mass produced) food, and eat worse. They're no longer "peasants," at this point, but more akin to the working poor of the United States, who also often cannot afford to eat well, though not to the point of starvation. It's a formula for making not only hunger but obesity: remove the ability to produce food, then remove the ability to pay for food, or replace it with only one choice: bad food.

We might begin by ditching the narrow focus on yields. As Jonathan Foley, director of the Institute on the Environment at the University of Minnesota, says, "It's not 'grow baby grow,'" which seem to be ebbing naturally as land quality deteriorates and chemicals become less effective, despite high-tech "advances" like genetically engineered crops. Better to ask not how much food is produced, but how it's produced.

We also need to see more investment in researching the benefits of traditional farming, which, because its benefits in profiting multinationals or international trade are limited, has never received investment on the same scale as corporate agriculture.

Instead, the money and energy (of all kinds) focused on boosting supply cannot be overstated. If equal resources were put into reducing waste, questioning the value of animal products, reducing overconsumption (where "waste" becomes "waist"), actively promoting saner, less energy-consuming alternatives, and granting that peasants have the right to farm their traditional landholdings, we could not only ensure that people could feed themselves but also reduce agriculture's contribution to greenhouse gases, chronic disease and energy depletion. □



Lousy Medicaid Arguments



PAUL KRUGMAN

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For now, the big news about Obamacare is the debacle of HealthCare.gov, the Web portal through which Americans are supposed to buy insurance on the new health care exchanges. For now, at least, HealthCare.gov isn't working for many users. It's important to realize, however, that this botch has nothing to do with the law's substance, and will get fixed.

After all, a number of states have successfully opened their own exchanges, doing for their residents exactly what the federal system is supposed to do everywhere else.

Connecticut's exchange is working fine, as is Kentucky's. New York, after some early problems, seems to be getting there. So, a bit more slowly, does California. In other words, the technical problems, while infuriating - heads should roll - will not, in the end, be the big story. The real threat remains the effort of conservative groups to sabotage reform, especially by blocking the expansion of Medicaid. This effort relies heavily on lobbying, lavishly bankrolled by the usual suspects, including the omnipresent Koch brothers. But it's not just money: the right has also rolled out some really lousy arguments. And I don't just mean lousy as in "bad"; I also mean it in the original sense, "infested with lice."

Before I get there, a word about something that, as far as we can

tell, isn't happening. Remember "rate shock"? A few months ago it was all the rage in right-wing circles, with supposed experts claiming that Americans were about to face huge premium increases.

It quickly became clear, however, that what these alleged experts were doing was comparing apples and oranges - and as Ezra Klein of The Washington Post pointed out, oranges that, in many cases, you can't even buy. Specifically, they were comparing the premiums young, healthy men were paying before reform with the premiums everyone - including those who previously couldn't get insurance because of pre-existing conditions - will pay under the new system. Oh, and they also weren't taking into account the subsidies many Americans will receive, reducing their costs.

Now people are signing up for policies on state exchanges and, to a limited extent, on the federal exchange.

Where are the cries of rate shock? Anecdotal evidence, which is all we have so far, says that people are by and large happily surprised by the low cost of their insurance. It was telling that when Fox News eagerly interviewed some middle-class Americans who said they had been hurt by the Affordable Care Act, it turned out that none of their guests had actually checked out their new options - they just knew health reform was terrible because Fox News told them so.

Now, about those lousy Medicaid arguments: Last year's Supreme Court decision upholding the Affordable Care Act did strike down one provision, the one that would have forced all states to accept an expansion of Medicaid, the already-existing program of health insurance for the poor. States are now free to reject that expansion.

Yet how can states justify turning down a federal offer to in-

sure thousands of their citizens, one that would cost them nothing in the first year and only trivial amounts later? Sheer spite - the desire to sabotage anything with President Barack Obama's name on it - is the real reason, but doesn't sound too good. So they need intellectual cover.

Enter the same experts, more or less, who warned about rate shock, to declare that Medicaid actually hurts its recipients. Their evidence? Medicaid patients tend to be sicker than the uninsured, and slower to recover from surgery.

OK, you know what to do: Google "spurious correlation health." You are immediately led to the tale of certain Pacific islanders who long believed that having lice made you healthy, because they observed that people with lice were, typically, healthier than those without. They were, of course, mixing up cause and effect: lice tend to infest the healthy, so they were a consequence, not a cause, of good health.

The application to Medicaid should be obvious. Sick people are likely to have low incomes; more generally, low-income Americans who qualify for Medicaid just tend in general to have poor health. So pointing to a correlation between Medicaid and poor health as evidence that Medicaid actually hurts its recipients is as foolish as claiming that lice make you healthy. It is, as I said, a lousy argument.

And the reliance on such arguments is itself deeply revealing, because it illustrates the right's intellectual decline. I mean, this is the best argument their so-called experts can come up with for their policy priorities?

Meanwhile, many states are still planning to reject the Medicaid expansion, denying essential health care to millions of needy Americans.

And they have no good excuse for this act of cruelty. □



SENSE OF SÃO PAULO SWEEPS MANHATTAN

Chef Alex Atala of D.O.M., a Sao Paulo restaurant specializing in Brazilian cuisine that is acclaimed as one of the world's top restaurants, in New York.

(Liz Barclay/The New York Times)

JEFF GORDINIER

© 2013 New York Times

NEW YORK - The Brazilian chef Alex Atala was in the middle of preparing two canapés and five dinner courses for about 70 people in Manhattan on Friday when it dawned on him that he needed black plates.

Most of his dishes, composed with Brazilian ingredients that even some of the most serious North American gastronomes have never heard of, would be whisked out of the kitchen on traditional white plates. But dessert was different: It consisted of three ravioli stuffed with skinny disks of banana and suffused with the flavors of lime and pripioca, an Amazonian root whose vaguely sweet, autumn-leaves-in-the-woods-ish fragrance tends to show up in perfumes.

The pouches themselves were made from a transparent gelatin, giving the ravioli an almost embryonic or extraterrestrial cast whose visual impact would be lost without a black plate. "If you put something transparent on a white surface, you don't

get enough contrast," Atala said.

Somehow, everything worked out. He made a request, and 75 black plates arrived a few hours later on the 51st floor of the Bank of America Tower in Midtown. Atala was thousands of miles away from his acclaimed D.O.M. restaurant in São Paulo, and juggling ingredients from the United States and Brazil in two different New York kitchens (the first in the back of

Momofuku Ssam Bar and the second in the Bank of America Tower). But he managed to confront one glitch after another without losing his cool.

In fact, merely tagging along with him seemed like a remedy for high blood pressure. In his orbit, silence is golden and spatula-throwing tantrums are banned. "There's no dramas," he said. "As you can see, there's no noise, no screaming."

Which is not to say that this dinner, the first D.O.M.-style meal he ever cooked in the U.S. (as part of the New York City Wine and Food Festival), was free of stress. Pulling off the feast depended on the arrival of two team members from D.O.M., Dante Bassi and Katrin Vetter, but their original flight from Brazil had been canceled. (In New York, they would work with Matthew Rudofker, the executive chef at Momofuku Ssam Bar, and other cooks plucked from David Chang's Momofuku empire; Atala and Chang are friends.)

Then there were the crucial ingredients those two cooks were bringing with them on the plane. Among other things, they had a container full of frozen strands of hearts of palm, which Atala planned to use, as a São Paulo-style replacement for pasta, for a fettuccine with butter, sage, Parmesan and popcorn powder.

The Brazilian cooks wound up making it to New York a day later, but "I was pretty nervous before," said Atala, 45. "I couldn't sleep." The fare at D.O.M. could

be seen as a culinary spin on a magical-realist novel about Brazil, and its connection to native ingredients runs so deep that conjuring up Atala's food without them would qualify as an empty gesture. For that reason, he and his crew had brought along Catupiry cheese and aromatic pepper oil, pripioca essence and a funky ghee-like Brazilian butter that Atala cheerfully described as "rancid."

And if anyone wanted a sample, the chef was happy to oblige.

"This is an amazing ingredient," he said at Booker and Dax, the cocktail spot attached to Ssam Bar, where he and his team shucked oysters and wrapped loins of lamb in string. He grabbed a squeeze bottle full of pripioca essence and squirted a few droplets into a napkin so that a visitor could breathe it in.

"When I smell this, it reminds me of musk, but much more delicate," he murmured. "There are oak notes, as well."

Probably to the relief of invasive-species monitors around the country, Atala declined to smuggle in any insects. His new cookbook, "D.O.M.: Rediscovering Brazilian Ingredients," features a striking image of a signature dish, "ants and pineapple": a pale-yellow cube of fruit crowned by a single saúva ant. Those who have popped it into their mouths say the ant has a haunting spiciness that calls to mind lemon grass, ginger and cardamom.

Like many chefs, though, he is not keen on short-changing his vision, and pairing Brazilian elements with those rustled up in New York caused him a bit of quiet vexation. One of his canapés involved langoustine enrobed in thin blankets of zucchini and topped with aromatic pepper oil and edible flowers.

Yet as the dinner hour loomed, the chef could be found garlanding each bite with microgreens instead. "I was going to use flowers," he said. "But the flowers were not beautiful." □



A loin of lamb course prepared by chef Alex Atala and his crew from D.O.M., a Sao Paulo restaurant specializing in Brazilian cuisine that is acclaimed as one of the world's top restaurants, in New York, Oct. 18, 2013. The dinner, Atala's first ever formal service in the United States, played with a wealth of native ingredients like hearts of palm, Catupiry cheese and aromatic pepper oils.

(Liz Barclay/The New York Times)